H. S. LEHR
AND HIS SCHOOL
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Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Founder of Ohio Northern University

H. S. LEHR AND HIS SCHOOL

A Story of the Private Normal Schools

BY SARAH LEHR KENNEDY

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To
THE TEACHERS OF THE OLD NORMAL
the story of whose sacrificial service
and devotion to its ideals
has been told many times over
in the character and lives
of its thousands of graduates
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FOREWORD

Just 100 years ago, in 1839, the first Normal School in this country was established by Horace Mann in Lexington, Massachusetts. That was well after the era of pioneer settlement of the states along the Eastern seaboard and during a time when industrialization was rapidly building up private and public wealth in those states. Yet even there the idea of training teachers took root slowly and many years passed before Horace Mann’s ideal for the training of teachers came to be accepted on a wide enough scale to lift the educational standards in the public schools.

In the states to the West, into which settlers were still moving and where a semi-frontier condition still existed, educational opportunities were sharply limited. Many colleges had already been established there, but for the most part they still maintained their ecclesiastical bias with a leaning toward the training of ministers. Their curricula were rigid and tuition costs limited the educational opportunities which they afforded to people of means. Public school education partook both of the frontier conditions of the region and of that other frontier in education which was just then being explored by the great educators of the nineteenth century.

By the close of the Civil War the task of settlement had been largely completed in the state of Ohio except for a few sections. One of the most important of these was the North-western part of the state, where a combination of forests and
swamps still presented an obstacle to settlement. Thus the region with which this book is concerned was, at the close of the Civil War, just emerging from frontier conditions. It was at that time that the school whose struggles are here described was brought into existence. In a sense this book is a case history tracing the evolution of the educational system in a fairly typical section of the Middle West from the time of its early settlement through to the present day. But in another sense, the story of this school is far from typical; for though it had its origin in conditions that might be duplicated in countless other communities, the monumental work of its founder would be difficult to parallel.

One of the most important and oft quoted clauses in the Ordinance of 1787 declared that "religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." Despite the intent of this provision, public school education in Ohio grew slowly. Control of the educational system was left to local school districts which, operating independently, maintained no common standards. Centralization of control over local schools proceeded slowly in a state where evidence of the pioneer spirit of individualism and independence were everywhere apparent. Furthermore, the tracts of school lands, allocated under the Ordinance of 1787, were slow in acquiring value. Most important, the state was largely agricultural and the great increases in productivity in agriculture were still in the future. The land produced not much more than a bare living and the people were poor.

Under such conditions how was the average young man or woman to get an education beyond what the country district schools had to offer? And how were teachers—trained teachers, as Horace Mann had urged—to be provided for the public schools?

Those who review the history of Normal School education in the Middle West will find that aside from a few notable examples, such as the Illinois Normal University at Bloomington, Illinois and the Michigan Normal School at Ypsilanti, Michigan, the training of teachers had to be left to colleges on the one hand and to the private academies on the other. For the most part the curricula of the colleges did not fit the requirements of teacher training education, nor were the school terms arranged so that a teacher could carry on his education in addition to his regular teaching activities. In addition, the expense of a college education was beyond the means of most teachers, and the opportunities for those who completed their college education in other occupations were too numerous for many to find their way into public school teaching.

Hence during the two or three decades following the Civil War, it was to the private academies and the private Normal Schools that the task of training teachers fell. With meager transportation facilities and unbelievably bad roads these schools had to be highly localized. Few were the communities that did not boast of an academy. Most of these schools were on the level of what we now think of as secondary or high school education, although outside of the larger cities, they were for years conducted on a pri-
vate basis. Despite their excellence as judged by the standards of the time, they were not adequate to the task of training teachers; and the private Normal Schools, developed in most cases from these academies or "select" schools, gradually evolved.

For more than a generation these private unendowed institutions prepared the great mass of teachers for the public schools. As the standards of education rose, their standards kept up with them. Gradually, however, the process of centralization of control of education by the state and the establishment of uniform standards in public school education made it impossible for most of them to continue. The function of teacher training came to be taken over by the state as Horace Mann had advocated years before. But in Ohio it was not until around the close of the century that this transition was effected.

To meet these new conditions, the few remaining private Normal Schools sought by emphasis upon those elements in their structure which were unique to maintain their existence in the face of strong competition from state supported Normal Schools usually by transfer of their management to some other group, such as the church or the community. Thus the private Normal School as such gradually passed out of the picture leaving to other types of organizations the task of teacher training education.

The history of these private Normal Schools has remained one of the unwritten chapters of American history. In the Report of the National Educational Association of 1928, Dr. A. E. Winship of the New England Journal of Education was quoted as saying:

"There are Normal Schools and State Teachers' Colleges in every state in the Union, and there is nothing available that gives the faintest suggestion of the birth throes of these teacher training institutions in the New World. No history or encyclopedia of education has anything by way of enlightenment on this important development of the public school system."

The purpose of this book is to tell the story of one of these private Normal Schools—one which has had perhaps as great an influence in its sixty-seven years of existence as any school in the Middle West. If the narrative seems to partake too largely of the story of one man's life, it is because the man and the institution which he founded were inseparably bound together. This was a school into which the founder projected his ideals and his life, and it was unavoidable that it should grow up around his personality. It is accordingly fitting that in this year, the one hundredth anniversary of his birth, the story of his life and of the school to which he gave it, should be presented to those whose affection for this school has endured through these many years.

In the preparation of this book, the author is fortunate in having, in addition to her own notes and recollections, Dr. Lehr's own "Reminiscences" written in 1904-1907 for the University Herald. This paper, begun as the weekly newspaper of the University, is now the Ada Herald.

Acknowledgements are due to many friends who have
given friendly criticism and counsel. A special debt is due to Dr. Irving Garwood of the Western Illinois State Teachers College, who made available to the author the manuscript of a biography of Dr. Lehr prepared by Dr. Garwood when he was a student at Ada. Among many others who have contributed of their time is Mr. Agnew Welsh, who was well known to more than one generation of Ohio Northern students.

Portions of this manuscript have been submitted to various friends of the University who have followed its preparation with much interest. Dr. Albert Edwin Smith has kindly read several chapters, and President Robert Williams has made some suggestions about the chapter on Ohio Northern University.

No list of acknowledgments would be complete without including Mr. Gordon Gardiner, who contributed importantly to the editing and organizing of the original material, Miss Ruth Weir who patiently saw the manuscript through draft form, and Mr. Barton Snyder of the Ada Herald, who has taken over much of the burden connected with its actual publication. In the planning of the form which this book should take, the author has also had sympathetic and generous assistance from Mr. W. F. Adams of the advertising firm of Williams and Saylor, New York City.
CHAPTER ONE

A WEAVER'S SON

1838-1854

"The experiences of the child largely determine the actions of the man."
—PESTALOZZI

A large covered wagon drawn by two weary horses was slowly following a trail around a mountain. The driver was a middle-aged man; by his side sat a pale-faced woman, whose deep blue eyes looked sadly ahead. In her arms was an infant. Behind them in the wagon huddled the little children; the older ones walked along beside the wagon or took turns in riding. George Lehr and his wife, Salome Lessig Lehr, with their family of ten children had left their comfortable farm home near Allentown, Pennsylvania, and were on their way to the "land of opportunity" beyond the Alleghenies.

Closely following the War of 1812, the West opened up rapidly. Long lines of immigrant wagons traveling
westward plied the trails along the rivers; crude flatboats
were floated down the Ohio and other rivers flowing west-
ward; canals were dug; fearless pioneers pushed their way
through the deep forests, blazing a path as they went.

Among those daring travelers who braved the forests
and the Indians was Joseph Lessig, brother of Salome
Lehr. After a long absence he had returned to his sister's
home in the Pennsylvania hills and had told a marvelous
tale. Far beyond the Alleghenies there were broad, fertile
prairies and vast forests yet untouched by the woodman's
ax; there was game of all kinds in abundance. True, there
were Indians and wild animals, but even so the opportu-
nity was a rare one. Now was the time to buy, for specula-
tors were rapidly buying up the land at unbelievably low
prices. Night after night, the returned traveler talked of
the great Northwest Territory and of the fortunes to be
made there. Finally, George and Salome Lehr mortgaged
their farm—eighty acres of rolling meadow and wooded
land—and obtained money to invest in new land in the
Northwest. It was agreed that Joseph Lessig was to go
ahead to buy the land. With his bag of gold he set out
on horseback across the mountains through trackless for-
est and deep marshes to the little known lands of northern
Illinois.

Months passed, even years, but the traveler did not re-
turn. Whether the Indians had killed him, or whether he
was a victim of highway robbers, no one ever knew. The
mortgage fell due, but there was no money to pay it. The
creditors came and took away the household furniture, sold
the farm and cheery little home, and set the family out-
of-doors. Putting the little that was left to them into a wag-
on, with sad hearts they said farewell to friends and rela-
tives and started for the far West to build up their broken
fortunes.

George Lehr, father of Henry Solomon Lehr, with whom
this story is concerned, was born at Mountainville, Lehigh
County, Pennsylvania, July 2, 1795. At the age of sev-
eteen he enlisted in the War of 1812, serving as fifer. When
he returned from the war, he organized a company of
militia, becoming captain and later brigadier-general. He
had had little opportunity to go to school but read and
wrote English and German fluently and had enough skill
in "calculating sums" to teach. He was a weaver by trade
—a "well-to-do man whom the neighbors loved for his
kindness, but pitied for his generosity."

Salome Lessig, the wife of George Lehr, was of English
descent. Her family had owned large tracts of land near
Chambersburg, Pennsylvania; but after the Revolutionary
War, an ancient claim given by the King of England, was
brought against the family by an English lord, and the
Lessigs were left bankrupt.

Such were the fortunes of the immediate ancestors of
Henry S. Lehr. They were humble and trustful; in pros-
perity, frugal; in adversity, steadfast; in peace, patriotic;
in war, fearless. They were of that great company known
as the "common people", called "common" in the usual
parlance because their deeds of valor consist only of the
ordinary duties of each day. Victories in such homely con-
flict no matter how great, are unheralded, unsung.
The journey of this family came to an end just beyond the Pennsylvania border near a village in Ohio then called Weathersfield, but later renamed Oldtown. It was at Oldtown, Mahoning County, that their eleventh child, Henry Solomon, was born on the eighth day of March, 1838. When he was two years old, the family moved a few miles farther westward to New Baltimore in Stark County. Three years later they pushed still farther on to Wayne County, where they settled near Cedar Valley, at that time a prosperous farming center with sawmills, gristmills, and other industries that thrived in the well-populated country community of those days.

Here they remained, and after some years, by thrift, perseverance, and self-denial acquired a small home of their own. Around them were many prosperous farmers, but this family had no farming implements; the sons became farm-hands and the daughters helped in the homes of the neighbors; the father plied his trade. He wove carpets, coverlets, table linen, linen for bedding and dresses, flannels, satinettes and the like. When Henry was eight years old he became his father's helper or "spool boy".

Often George Lehr worked until midnight with Henry at his side. While the weaver fed the loom by the light of the open fire, the neighbors would come in and sit around the fireplace and visit. Each one would relate some tale—perhaps of the Indians, or of travelers lost in the forest, or of the wild animals that lurked about by night. Nearly all of the country folk believed in goblins and ghosts and often would tell of witches that practiced the "evil eye" and cast spells on feeble folk. The little boy standing by the loom, winding the spools, would shudder with fear. Then his father would turn the conversation and talk of his experiences in the War of 1812; of the capture of the city of Washington, or of the attack on Baltimore, at both of which engagements he had been present. With pardonable pride he would speak of the time when, as inspector of the brigade, he was ordered to call out his regiment of militia to attend the memorial services of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams; he would tell of his personal acquaintance with Robert Livingston of Revolutionary fame. These stories of war and of heroes made the boy hold his head high; he was proud of his father's record as a soldier.

At other times the weaver would relate anecdotes of the Revolutionary War, which his father, Ulrich Loehr (as the name was then spelled) had told him. Henry liked those tales best and never tired of hearing about his grandfather's fearlessness at the battle of Brandywine, nor of the wound he received at the battle of Monmouth. Seven long years Ulrich Loehr had served in the Revolution, at first as a drummer lad, later as a regular soldier.

Henry had never spoken a word of English until he was eight years old when he became his father's "spool boy". During the long winter months he picked up a few words of English from the English-speaking neighbors who came in to visit. He was of a very sensitive nature and felt it
very deeply when he heard people call him “that poor little Dutch boy”. Moved by the poverty of those early years he looked forward eagerly to the day when he could help bear the family burden.

From an early age he possessed a passion to serve others. His mother was always in poor health. When but a small child, he would often arise in the night at her call to attend to her needs so that the older members of the family could have their accustomed rest. He would rise early in the morning to start the fire to prepare food for her. Sometimes the fire, though so carefully covered at night, would die out by morning. Then Henry would go across the hills to a neighbor for a shovelful of coals and run home swiftly, lest the coals die out before he could return. Matches had been invented some years before, but they were a luxury this family could not afford.

In those days education was a prize to be possessed only by a few. In some of the large cities there were high schools that presented certain academic subjects. In the towns there were elementary schools. In country places the school term was from three to six months during the year depending upon the number of pupils in the district. In summer there was sometimes a short term, but usually only children too young to work could attend, as labor-saving machinery had not yet come into general use; many hands were needed to reap the grain and harvest it; to gather the fruit, preserve and dry it for winter use; to cut the wood for winter fuel; to split the rails for fences. Food and shelter were necessities; education was a luxury. This boy watched the children of the prosperous neighbors go to school. He wanted to go too. On Sundays, seated high in a lofty tree to hide his shabby clothes, with longing heart he watched the people go to church. On week days he worked either as his father’s helper or for the farmers nearby; he never had time to go fishing or hunting, or to engage in sports and games.

Henry did not start to school until he was twelve years old and then went but three days, as it was necessary for him to go back to work. At that age he raked “half after a cradle”; that is, he did half the work of one man. About this time his father was taken very ill. Henry came in from work and found the family engaged in prayer. His mother met him at the door and said, “Henry, you pray, perhaps God will hear you”. The boy longed to go to school and knew that if his father died he could not go. He went out on a hillside, knelt under a large tree, and asked God to restore his father. After some time spent there, into his heart came the assurance, “Your father will not die”. He hastened back to the house where he was met by his sister Harriet who told him that his father had taken a change for the better and that the doctor had said he would live. In later years, even up to his old age, on his trips to Wayne County he would go to that same hillside and kneel again at that same spot.

The story that follows tells of the realization of his desire for an education and of his long life of usefulness. In his characteristic, brisk way he wrote of his first days at school in the following words:
"I worked as a farm-hand when I was fifteen and received five dollars a month working twenty-six days for a month; but in the summer of 1854 during harvest I received twelve dollars for the harvest month. We worked from early morning until after dark. I never was strong enough to pitch hay; but there were few men who could beat me covering corn, binding wheat, or cutting and husking corn.

"I went to common school all-told about one year between 1850 and 1854. In that time I learned to speak English, learned to read, went through Ray's *Practical Arithmetic* five times, went nearly through Mitchell's *School Geography and Atlas*, about half way through Pinneo's *Grammar*, and studied a little algebra. When I first studied arithmetic I went through Ray's *Third Part* in six weeks. I was considered a good speller, but I think I never scribbled over a dozen sheets of paper in learning to write before I began teaching school.

"In the spring of 1854 I went to the village school about a month. One day a book agent who dropped in to see the teacher gave me a circular of a school at Marlborough, Stark County, Ohio, taught by Alfred Holbrook. It told how much could be done there in ten weeks. That evening the teacher said I ought to go to Marlborough to school, that she believed that a term there would enable me to teach the next winter. I hurried home, wild with excitement. One of my brothers agreed to loan me twenty-five dollars, and that, with my earnings as a farm-hand, would enable me to attend Professor Holbrook's school for one term."
CHAPTER TWO

THE YOUNG TEACHER

1854-1857

"The teacher's work therefore is rather to train than to inform the minds of the pupils. The minds of pupils naturally tend toward improvement and the teacher's duty therefore is to free the way before this tendency in order that it may have fullest play."—ALFRED HOLBROOK, Founder (1855) National Normal University, Lebanon, Ohio.

Marlborough was about fifty miles from Wooster. As this was to be Henry’s first venture away from home, the trip was the subject of much discussion in the family. Concerning his preparation for the eventful journey, Mr. Lehr wrote:

“I borrowed a carpet-bag from one of my brothers to carry the few books and clothes I had; it was a real carpet-bag because it was made out of carpet. I had a
spelling book, Ray's *Third Part Arithmetic*, Pinneo's *Grammar*, McGuffey's *Fifth Reader*, Mitchell's *School Geography and Atlas*, and Ray's *Algebra, First Part*. From one of my brothers I borrowed a small dictionary and an old *English Reader*. That was my stock of books. I bought a cheap coat at Wooster, a hat and a pair of shoes; all of my other clothes were home-made. My trousers were made in the good old Dutch way of seventy-five or eighty years ago. My mother had spun and colored the wool, my father had woven the cloth; my mother and sisters had fitted and made the clothes, so they were really home-made."

When the time came to go, his parents knelt to commit their boy to the care of the heavenly Father. Then his mother, in accordance with her ideals of rectitude, placed the Bible on the table and asked him to put his hand upon it. With her hand on his she asked him to promise her that he would never play cards. He promised, and started on his journey.

One of his brothers drove him to Wooster, the nearest station, to take the early morning train. He found upon inquiry that there was no railroad passing through Marlborough, so he bought a ticket for Louisville, a small town about seven or eight miles distant from Marlborough. From that village he walked the rest of the journey.

On reaching Marlborough he wandered about the village, and soon met a young man who volunteered to take him to Professor Holbrook's residence and introduce him to the Professor and some of his teachers. Of that momentous occasion Mr. Lehr said:

"I had never been introduced to anyone and of course did not know what to say. I can now see Professor Holbrook as he sat in his arm chair. When he asked me what I wanted to study, I named about every branch I had ever heard of. I still can see how he and his assistant looked at each other and smiled."

"I found a boarding place and bought a candlestick, a pair of snuffers, and some candles. On Monday morning I started to school. Professor Holbrook examined us in arithmetic and grammar. I was sent to the board and given a problem in addition of fractions. I got the answer to the sum before anyone else, but the solution was arranged in my own way of working problems. Professor Holbrook smiled and put me in the advanced class in arithmetic; I was also put in the advanced class in geography, but in the B class in grammar.

"My stock of money dwindled rapidly, so I left my boarding place and rented a room where I could board myself. I lived on bread and butter and water. I soon saw that I was not dressed like the other boys, and I was ashamed of my old-fashioned clothing, and was very homesick."

After suffering from homesickness and embarrassment for several weeks, he could stand it no longer and decided to forsake his ambition to become a scholar. He wrote to his parents that he was coming home. The next day he
wrote that he had decided to remain at school. The next day he wrote that he was about to start home; then he wrote that he would stay and try it longer, but the next day he went. At first sight of familiar objects his homesickness vanished, and he was heartily ashamed of himself. In later years when he had large numbers of students under his care he was always tender and kind to the homesick and advised them, if possible, to go home for a few days. The narrative continues:

"The term closed about the middle of October. I left Marlborough Friday forenoon though the school did not close until evening, as I wanted to take the examination for teachers at Wooster on Saturday. I walked to Canton, a distance of sixteen miles, and by visiting orchards along the way had apples for my dinner. For my supper, I bought three cents' worth of crackers. About one o'clock in the morning I took the train for Wooster and arrived there at three o'clock. In the morning I went to a brook nearby to wash; with a little wooden comb that had cost me a penny, I combed my hair. I took off my coat and gave it a dusting, took a stick and knocked the dust off my trousers as well as I could. My toilet completed, I went to a grocery to purchase my breakfast. I had just five cents; three of them I spent for crackers. After partaking of my breakfast I made inquiry regarding the examination, and found that it would be held in School House No. 4.

"The examinations at that time in Wayne County were oral. For a specimen of our penmanship we had to write our names on their roll-book. A gentleman who stood back of the chair when I enrolled, seeing my poor writing, turned to some of the other candidates and said, 'If that little fellow can get a certificate, we are all safe.' There were fifty-two applicants for certificates; we were scattered on benches around the room, with no desks in front of us, and were allowed to hold no books.

"I remember several questions that I was asked that day. The question, 'What is ratio?' started near the head of the class. It passed over forty of the applicants before it reached me. Luckily I had looked up the definition a few days before and readily answered. I observed that my definitions in grammar attracted some attention. Professor Holbrook had introduced Covell's Grammar the term I was in school and the definitions in it were out of the ordinary.

"In the evening the president of the Board of Examiners lectured the applicants for not making greater advancement in their profession. He said there were applicants there who had taught twenty years or more, but pointing to a youthful applicant, said, 'That boy will carry home the best certificate given today.' 'That boy' had only two cents to pay for crackers for his dinner. He had not had money to pay for any laundry that week. He was not as neatly dressed as the other applicants. He was sleepy, tired, and hungry, but that remark was encouraging; many of the applicants had failed.

"After the examination I walked home, a distance of six miles, without supper. I was welcomed warmly, and
ate a very, very hearty supper. As I had some debts and needed clothing, I looked for work at once and had no difficulty in finding something to do. When I told my family that I intended to teach, my oldest brother objected because of my size.

"However, in about a week after I got home he went with me to see the directors of the district near-by. He suggested that we go after dark and not get off our horses so that the directors might not see how little I was. We used that plan successfully, and I was employed for three months at fourteen dollars a month, twenty-six days for a month: I was to 'board 'round' with the scholars. The people would furnish the wood for fuel, but I had to start the fires and sweep the schoolhouse. This was the Dutch Flat School, later called Hickory Grove.

"I had been in Professor Holbrook's class in teacher training about five weeks. I now remembered that he had said the teacher ought to be at the schoolhouse first on the first morning—in fact every morning—and should see that the house was open early and the room neat and clean. One of my brothers took me to school on the first Monday morning of the term; we had six miles to travel, but I was there and had the fire started before any of the pupils arrived.

"There were about twenty pupils who were as large as, or larger than, myself. The schoolhouse was built of logs. The one chair in the building was for the teacher. There were little benches placed around the stove for the smaller children; they had no desks. For the older ones there were desks fashioned of boards or heavy slabs resting on wooden pins driven in the walls. The pupils sat on benches arranged beside the desks; when writing or working problems in arithmetic the pupils faced the wall. There was no blackboard in the room.

"'Boarding 'round' had its advantages and its disadvantages. Generally one got the best of fare and good treatment. I shall never forget my first supper 'boarding 'round'. We had chicken, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, hot biscuits, different spreads, honey, grape pie and apple pie.

"After I had taught three months the directors employed me for another month throwing off four days. That gave me fifty-six cents a day. At the close of the term I went to Salem, Ohio, to continue my studies under Professor Holbrook, who had left Marlborough and was superintending the public schools at Salem. In addition to the public school work, he was conducting a 'select school' which was devoted to the training of teachers.

"I remained at home that fall and worked on the farm as a hired hand. Sometime in September I took a day off, borrowed a horse, and went out in search of a school. I went to the directors of the district adjoining the one where I had taught the winter before. The first director I met was plowing. In a rather gruff manner he asked me my name. On learning it, he said: 'Well, are you the boy that taught in Dutch Flat last winter?' I replied in the affirmative. He stopped his team and ask-
ed me whether I had ever studied the Western Calculator. I replied in the negative.

"He said he had some sums he wanted me to work. The first problem he gave me was this: If a third of six be three, what will the fourth of twenty be? I solved it mentally by proportion and in less than a minute gave him the answer. I observed that he was greatly astonished. He inquired, 'How do you work that sum?' I told him I solved it by proportion. He said that was not the way they worked it when he went to school. I then solved it by analysis and he said that was all right.

"Then he gave me a problem which we used to call the 'rat-egg problem': 'From a nest containing a certain number of eggs, a rat carried away \( \frac{1}{2} \) of the eggs in the nest and \( \frac{1}{2} \) egg more; the next night it carried away a certain number, etc., etc. How many eggs were there at first? (Problem not complete). Luckily I solved the problem without much difficulty. I solved it mentally and gave him the answer. He was satisfied and said, 'As far as I am concerned you may have the school.'

"The directors engaged me for five months at eighteen dollars a month, twenty-four days for a month; I was to 'board 'round' with the scholars and to be my own janitor.

"I felt well satisfied with my contract. In 1852 I had worked for five dollars a month, twenty-six days a month; for the harvest month of 1854 I had been paid twelve dollars a month; the following winter, 1854-55, I had received fourteen dollars a month, twenty-six days to a month (and by a raise of salary twenty-five days); and now a contract at eighteen dollars a month for five months of twenty-four days each, looked large in my mental vision. I thought my fortune was made.

"The winter of 1855-56 was one of the most pleasant terms I ever taught. What especially pleased me was that some of the boys from the school where I had taught the winter before—my first school—walked four and five miles to be under my instruction. The days were too short to do what I found to do. Frequently we would have night school to solve hard problems and do extra parsing."

During this winter an incident occurred that caused the little teacher's fame to spread throughout the county. It had become his custom on beginning to study or read a book to begin with the title page, read it carefully before proceeding to the next page—omitting nothing. In the front page of his spelling book he had observed the dia
critical marks but had not understood them. In the readers, too, at the close of each lesson there were usually a few explanatory remarks on the art of expression and pronunciation. This note at the close of one of the lessons puzzled him: "'O, Lord God. The student who can correctly render these words has made no mean accomplishment; they are often pronounced 'O Lud Gaud'.'"

Long the young teacher pondered over this statement. He determined to find out the use of the strange little marks in the speller and reader. When his mother made her next trip to Wooster, he gave her money to buy him a
dictionary. Great was his consternation when she brought home a Worcester's Dictionary. He had wanted Webster's — had known of no other; but he said nothing to his mother of his disappointment. Worcester's method of marking pronunciation differed from Webster's. This fact greatly increased his difficulty. Painstakingly he compared the marks over the words in the speller, in the dictionary, and in the reader; presently he made the discovery that the little dots and curves indicated the sounds of the vowels in a syllable or word. Strange that he had not observed it before! His delight knew no bounds. He could now know exactly how English words should be pronounced even though he had been born a Pennsylvania Dutchman!

He could scarcely wait until morning to tell his pupils about it. As soon as school opened he told them of his discovery and confessed that heretofore he had made many mistakes in pronunciation. From that time there were daily drills in pronunciation in which both pupils and teacher joined. The report soon spread that this teacher had not been ashamed to admit his mistakes. No one thought the less of him for that, for he had corrected his errors and had shared his knowledge with his pupils.
CHAPTER THREE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN IDEAL

1857-1865

"Could a college so arrange its curriculum that a student could enter at his convenience and study what he wanted to study when he wanted to study it?" — H. S. Lehr, the young student.

About the middle of March (1857), his teaching term closed and he at once entered Mt. Union Seminary, now Mt. Union College, near Alliance, Ohio. For two successive summers he had attended Professor Alfred Holbrook's select school, first at Marlborough and then at Salem; but Professor Holbrook had now left the vicinity and had gone to Lebanon, Ohio, to take charge of a Normal School that had been organized by the State Teachers' Association. Mr. Lehr would have been glad to continue under Professor Holbrook's instruction as he considered him a great teacher, but the distance to Lebanon was too great. Of his
experiences during that first term at Mt. Union Seminary he said:

"The second time I was put on the program for debate in the literary society I had joined, the question for discussion was this: 'Resolved, That all laws enacted by Congress should be obeyed until repealed by the same authority.' At that time I was a strong pro-slavery Democrat; believing that the Fugitive Slave Law was all right, I took the affirmative. The leading speaker on the negative was one of the best debaters I had heard up to that time. In order to prove that slavery was right I brought up Abraham and the laws of Moses. My opponent in his reply said that the gentleman might as well advocate polygamy as slavery. It was the custom of the society to allow twenty minutes for miscellaneous discussion. I replied by quoting Abraham, Jacob, David, Solomon, and remarked that Paul said that an elder and a deacon should be the husband of one wife, and, of course, by inference, all the other church members might have all the wives they pleased. Some of the students in the audience called out, 'Mormon! Mormon!'; others, 'Joe Smith!' For some years after that, in the college debates, I was referred to as the 'South Carolina Democrat.'"

The next winter and the following summer he taught in neighboring districts. He could have returned to the same district year after year as he was always asked to do so, but he desired to go to different districts that he might make the acquaintance of a larger number of people. At the close of his summer term he again returned to Mt. Union College. Continuing the narrative:

"Sometime during the winter a Bostonian by the name of Underwood was engaged to lecture to the students on 'The Blighting Sin of Slavery.' It was a convincing lecture. I well remember his comparison between the Northern and Southern states. He said, for example, that Massachusetts was settled in 1620; Virginia, in 1607. The one has an area of a little less than eight thousand square miles, and the other seventy thousand. He compared the soil, climate, mineral resources, water power, forests, navigable rivers, commerce, wealth, public schools, and colleges, quoting from the Census and from other statistics. I was astonished at the superiority of the Northern states in the matter of schools, commerce and wealth.

"His statements were presented so logically and so eloquently that my faith in human slavery as a divine institution was greatly shaken. After the lecture was over, I went to my room, examined the statistical tables in Mitchell's School Atlas, found what he had said in his comparison of the states to be only too true, and about one o'clock in the morning I retired to my bed a Republican."

At the close of the term he went home. As usual, he worked in the harvest fields, raking and binding after a cradle, doing the work of two men and earning one dollar a day. That fall (1859) he was employed to teach at Golden Corners for six months at a salary of thirty dollars a
month; for two months he was to "board 'round" but after that he was to pay his board. The previous winter two teachers had been whipped out, and a third had had a hard time to enforce discipline; a number of pupils had been expelled. These difficulties arose from family feuds of a grievous nature. He took the school without any fear and said afterwards that he believed he had done the best governing that year in his school life.

The first morning he announced that he would take no part in the feuds which had previously disrupted the school. The chief offender was a young man who made a habit of carrying a dirk and pistol to terrorize the pupils. As a result of the teacher's wise but firm government, this pupil's character was completely transformed. He became a warm personal friend of his instructor and later accompanied him to Mt. Union college. In after years he became president of a state university in the West.

Of that term Mr. Lehr wrote:

"That winter, in addition to regular work, I conducted a night school. The principal study was mental arithmetic. There were also contests in pronunciation. The school would divide into two sections or sides. The teachers and sometimes some of the older pupils would spell the words, and the scholars had to pronounce them. This plan compelled the pupils to learn the diacritical marks and hence the correct pronunciation of many of the most common English words, such as dog, log, hog, frog, fast, last, calf, half, chalk, fought, caught, taught, and the like, as well as more difficult words.

"Fifty years ago the spelling school presented an entertainment in the district school comparable to the athletic activities of the high schools of today. The crack spellers and their friends would go ten miles to a spelling match. The home schools would have a secret meeting each week to practice. Many were the drills employed by the teachers to produce invincible spellers. One of the most popular methods of teaching spelling was to 'spell for head marks'. The class would stand in a line on the floor, each member taking his place according to his number or position at the last recitation. The teacher would then pronounce the words of the lesson. When a word was misspelled it was passed on down the line until it was correctly spelled, the successful pupil passing on ahead of the one who had misspelled the word. Sometimes one at the foot went to the head of the class. Another method was to 'trap words'. The teacher in this case would pay no attention to the misspelled word, leaving it to the watchfulness of the class. This was great sport for the good spellers.

"Spelling down" was a pleasure reserved for the last hour Friday afternoon. Leaders appointed by the teacher would 'choose up'. Lots would be cast as to which leader had the first choice; the best spellers were always selected first. The choosing continued until all were on the floor. The contestants stood on opposite sides of the room, the teacher pronouncing words alternately from
side to side. Sometimes every word in the speller was pronounced and then search was made for more difficult words before the last contestant 'went down'. The best spellers were the most popular pupils.

"The school had been in session but a few weeks when pupils started to come from other districts. Some who lived ten or more miles away applied for admission. I was asked to start an academy; but I refused, for I was only twenty years old and was not nearly through college. In the spring of 1859 when I went back to Mt. Union, thirteen of my students accompanied me. The next fall I taught in the same school; again in the spring on returning to college, many of my pupils and young friends went with me.

"During the following summer, I spent my vacation in the harvest field as usual. To save my shoes I went barefooted. One day when I was busy raking and binding wheat, two well-dressed, fine looking men drove to the fence, tied their horse, and came to me in the field. They told me that they were members of the school board of Smithville, a village near-by, and that they wanted me to teach their school. We entered into a contract then and there whereby they employed me for five months at thirty-six dollars a month.

"A short time later a college classmate informed me that early in the spring two members of this Board of Directors had re-employed him to teach there, but that the spring election had gone against him, and that I had been employed by his enemy on the old Board and the new members. He requested that as a friend I would resign. I granted his request.

"I then went to Wooster, feeling somewhat discouraged as I had refused several offers. While there I met two of the directors of Jefferson, a small village in Wayne County. They offered me thirty-three dollars a month for the winter term. I accepted and on the following Monday morning started for college. In about two weeks I learned that the situation at Jefferson was exactly the same as at Smithville. In addition to this unpleasant situation, to add to my unpopularity, the report had been circulated in Jefferson that I was a stiff Methodist and would allow no dancing. Some of my friends, and even my father, advised me to resign, but I refused to do so.

"School began about the last of October; two weeks passed quietly. On Friday a friend informed me that on the following Monday the older scholars were coming in a body, that nearly all of them were friends of the teacher of the previous winter, and that the best thing I could do was to resign. I did not resign.

"On Monday morning I had seventy-nine pupils of all classes, among them a number of students who had been teachers. It was the most advanced school in my experience. The class in McGuffey's *Fifth Reader* had exercises in reading that morning. A young lady, who herself was a teacher and a warm friend of the former teacher, had in her exercise this line from Milton,

> 'And winds the signal blow'.

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She gave "i" the long sound. I remarked that sometimes in poetry it was allowable to give 'i' the long sound in a noun, but I thought it best not to do so in this case. She said all her former teachers had given "i" the long sound in that line. I told her to parse it; she declared the word was a verb and not a noun. After I analyzed and parsed the sentence all the other members of the class agreed that the word was a noun. She still persisted that it was a verb. The class in arithmetic followed the recitation in reading. During that period a number of errors unnoticed by their former instructors were corrected.

"At the noon hour when I returned to the classroom, all the young men and all the young women but two came and said that hereafter they would be my friends—that they had learned more that morning than they had in a month in the preceding winter. They said that they would no longer object to my opening the school with Bible reading and prayer. The previous winter the noon hour had been spent in singing and dancing to the music of a violin. I encouraged the pupils to 'sing' geography at noon on rainy days. It was something new and useful, and all, or nearly all, appeared to enjoy it. The tune in most common use was this one:

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\begin{verbatim}
[Music notation]
\end{verbatim}
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All the states and capitals could be arranged to suit this tune.

"That term I devised the 'Tense Tree'. We were using Payne's Grammar and Greene's Analysis. The authors differed in expression; I tried to harmonize the names and definitions as used by the two authors. I had been studying Redfield's Zoology at night for college examination. Redfield illustrated the animal kingdom with the figure of a tree. It occurred to me to use a 'tree' to illustrate the modes and tenses. This method of teaching grammar and analysis was entirely new. It met with great favor at once and proved so great a success in presenting 'time' and 'state' that I continued its use thereafter as long as I taught those subjects.

"During this winter I organized a literary society. People came to it from miles around. It was my first effort in that line, and the first literary society organized in that section of the country. It was pronounced a great success. I had only two spelling schools that term; literary societies were beginning to displace spelling schools.

"There were two saloons in the village. At the first 'spelling' three drunken men came to have some fun with the praying teacher. I was put on my guard. When I called the school to order, I remarked that as the house was so crowded, I would appoint a committee of three gentlemen to assist me in preserving good order. I surveyed the crowd quite carefully and selected the fellows that were just full enough to be contrary. Everybody was astonished at my poor judgment, but the plan
worked like a charm. I provided them with chairs and gave them authority. Someone made a frivolous remark about one of the ‘judges’ and immediately the offender was taken from the room. All laughed and then became quiet. I never had better order in a spelling school. The joke got into one of the county papers. We had no further trouble at any of the meetings.”

His school closed the last week in March, 1861. During the winter, in addition to his school work—and his work was heavy, for he taught seven hours daily—he had attempted to carry three college studies for examination. During the last seven years he had worked on the farm probably about nine months, had taught school thirty-three months, and had completed the two year preparatory course at Mt. Union, and more than three years of the regular course.

In those days, one who earned his way through college by teaching district school in winter met with almost unsurmountable difficulties. The college curriculum was iron clad—inflexible. The student had two alternatives—either he must have enough money in hand to stay in college the entire year, or he must carry the regular work while at home and take examination on re-entrance in order to be able to find classes suited to his advancement.

As this young man sat night after night, studying by the light of a tallow candle, long after the farmers with whom he boarded had retired, he sometimes reflected on the possibility of an institution of learning that would adjust its curriculum to meet the specific needs of such stu-

dents as himself. Why should he be obliged to read Horace when he had not yet read Virgil? Must it ever be that he must accommodate himself to classes beyond his experience and progress? Why should not the school accommodate itself to the student rather than the student to the school? Would it be possible for a college to present the most important major subjects every term?

Such thoughts were daring, startling! Yet, the more he considered the matter, the more he believed that a school where a student could study what he wanted to study when he wanted to study it, would meet a great need. To be sure, the financial obligation to be assumed by the college which would dare to offer such a curriculum would be great on account of the increase in the number of instructors, but would not the increase in attendance overcome this difficulty? Why should such a plan be impossible? The idea was most alluring to him and became fixed in his mind. Could he, himself, establish such an institution? How could it be accomplished?

The spring term of 1861 opened duly at Mt. Union, but Mr. Lehr did not enter as he found it necessary to take a much needed rest. Several weeks later when enroute to college he found at Wooster, where he was to take the train, the very wildest excitement imaginable. Word had just been received of the attack upon Fort Sumter. He at once enlisted. By the time he received notification that he was rejected, the term at Mt. Union was too far advanced for him to enter, so he went to Vermillion Institute, at Haysville, Ashland County, where he spent a most profitable term. A sec-
ond time he tried to enlist, and was again rejected. A year or so later he made another attempt to enlist and was accepted. He was assigned to Company G of the 86th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, but after four months of service was discharged for constitutional frailty. Then followed a winter of teaching, and again in the spring he went to Mt. Union, to continue his college work.

In August, 1864, he again enlisted and was assigned to Company F in the 176th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. After the battle of Nashville he spent several months in the hospital, and after his recuperation, was made chief nurse of Ward 2, Nashville Post Hospital. In that capacity he remained until his discharge from the army, May 20, 1865.
CHAPTER FOUR

LEHR COMES TO ADA

1865-1866

"Because this little man left other Ohio towns and settled in a little swampy, backwoods hamlet of Hardin County, those towns lost their opportunity for fame, and Johnstown, the hamlet of the swamp, became the seat of an influential university."—RALPH PARLETTE, Author, University of Hard Knocks.

The war was now over. It was 1865 and Henry S. Lehr was twenty-seven years old. The great problem of demobilization, which the close of every war brings, was an intensely personal one to him. What should he do now? He had not quite completed his college course at Mt. Union. Should he return to college or should he resume his teaching?

He said in his "Reminiscences":

"Teachers in 1865 were itinerants. The prospect of
moving from one place to another was not alluring to me. Besides I did not want to continue in public school work for any length of time, as it was my purpose to found a school and conduct it according to my idea as to how a school for the people, especially the common people, should be conducted. I wanted this institution to be one that would recognize God in all its teachings, but still be non-sectarian; I believed in the co-education of the sexes; and I believed that a school could be so conducted that a student could study what he wanted, when he wanted to study it. But where should I find such an institution? That was an important question to be answered.

"After careful consideration I decided to go to Missouri. I had an uncle living near the central part of that state who promised to assist me in this project. Through his influence I was elected principal of a town school at three dollars a day. My father, however, urged me not to go to Missouri. He argued that I was a strong Republican and that if I went, I would in all probability become embroiled in some unhappy political situation. Nevertheless, I packed my trunk on Saturday evening, expecting to start to Missouri on Monday morning.

"That evening I received a letter from a doctor in Alliance, Ohio, asking me to read medicine with him. He agreed to admit me later as an equal partner. My father pleaded and prayed that I would accept the offer. Moved by his earnest entreaties, I resigned from the position in Missouri, relinquished my cherished plan of founding a school, and agreed to study to become a doctor to please my father."

"About August first I began the study of medicine in Alliance, Ohio. The doctor furnished me a bed in his office but I had to pay three dollars a week for board.
In a short time an incident occurred that caused me to doubt seriously whether I could stand by my agreement to study with this doctor."

A runaway accident occurred one day on the street outside the doctor’s office. Mr. Lehr was alone in the office. He was alone in the office at the time, and when a young man was brought in with a broken leg, he quickly set it as he had had experience in such work while in the army hospital. In a short time the doctor came in, and having heard that the young man had been brought in, inquired how much Mr. Lehr had charged for his services. When he found that no charge had been made because the people were very poor, he was much disgusted with his apprentice and did not hesitate to say so in strong language. Mr. Lehr in turn defended what he had done and the disagreement was sharp enough to make Mr. Lehr wonder if he should stay there further.

Again referring to the "Reminiscences":

"Besides this unpleasant affair with the doctor, a payment of three dollars a week for board was pulling on my pocketbook, so I engaged to teach a village school at Barryville, near Alliance. I now resolved that at the close of my term I would delay no longer but would select a location somewhere in the North and start a school
where a student could enter at any time and select his own line of work.

"My father was agreeable to the change in my plans but earnestly requested me to start the proposed Normal School near my home. I studied our community and the adjoining county but could see no opening for such a school. In the three immediate counties where I was known as a teacher and student, there were eight academies and one college.

"I closed my term of school March 2, 1866, and started for my father's home. While there I met a former pupil of mine who was superintendent of the schools at Elkhart, Indiana. He said that he had come home to look for me in order that I might take his place, as he desired to enter an eastern college. I agreed to go and see his Board of Education. In my favor I had my friend's resignation and also a strong recommendation from him. I met the Board and we soon came to an agreement at four dollars a day, but when I asked permission to advertise for non-resident students, with a view of starting a private Normal School, the Board refused to grant permission. Their objection was that I might devote too much time and energy to securing 'foreign' patronage. I gave them my scheme and plan in full, but most of the members of the Board thought it was visionary and would not accede. I stated that I would not take the place on any other condition. They replied that they would look for another man.

"I returned to Wooster the next morning and found two letters awaiting me from soldier friends living at Dunkirk, a small village in northwestern Ohio on the Pennsylvania Railroad, requesting me to come there as there were vacancies in their school. On Tuesday, March 13th, I started west toward Dunkirk to hunt a location where I could find a school according to my own plan. I stopped at a number of towns on the way. In some places they had just employed a teacher; in others they showed no interest in my plan. I reached Dunkirk duly and met the Board of Education. They said that they could get a first-class teacher for a dollar a day. I left my soldier friends in Dunkirk, disgusted with school boards and 'dollar-a-day teachers', forgetting that I had been one myself.

"I went on west to the next town which was a small village named Johnstown, arriving there about nine o'clock in the morning. On inquiry I was given the names of the school directors. I called at the residence of one of them and was informed that he was in Chicago on business connected with his sawmill and would not be home for two or three days. I then started for the residence of Mr. S. M. Johnson, the president of the Board of Education. It had been snowing and raining for several days. There was only one street open to travel north and south, and it was a sea of mud. The water was so deep in some places that I had to climb along on the rail fence. When I reached my destination Mrs. Johnson told me that her husband was at his sawmill in the
east part of town. I waded and climbed my way back to the railroad, and easily found him.

"I told him my errand, what I purposed to do, and what I felt sure could be done in time. I discussed with him the fact that there were no seminaries, academies, Normal School, or colleges in northwestern Ohio—that the nearest college to the northeast was Heidelberg College at Tiffin, the nearest Normal School was at Lebanon in Warren County, that the nearest colleges to the southeast were at Springfield and Delaware. I explained that after the marshes in northwestern Ohio were drained, the people would become wealthy and would want to educate their children; that Johnstown, located on the Pennsylvania railroad midway between the junctions at Forest and Lima, would be easily accessible from all directions and would be a good place to establish a great school.

"Mr. Johnson said that they were looking for just such projects to build up the town and suggested that I start the school at once. I replied that I had not the money to do so, that it would take some years to advertise and build up a clientele, and that there would need to be much labor and sacrifice. I told him that Mt. Union College where I had been a student, began with six students and that Professor O. S. Hartshorn, the first president, had had to make many sacrifices to make that college a success. I explained to him that my plan was to teach in the public schools of some town until I was known as a teacher; during the period when the public schools were not in session, I wanted the use of the school building to conduct a 'select' or private tuition school to which non-resident students would be invited. Later, when my reputation as a teacher was sufficiently well-established, and the select school an assured success, I would ask the citizens to help me to put up a suitable building for a Normal School.

"He advised me to see the third member of the Board. I called on him; but he said that inasmuch as his time would expire in a few weeks, he would take no part in employing a teacher, but that if the others would consent he would not object.

"While awaiting the return of Mr. William League, the absent member of the Board, I went on westward and visited a number of towns in northwestern Ohio and in Indiana. All were supplied with teachers for the summer term. The Board at Monroeville, Indiana, was interested in my proposition, and agreed to employ me for $2.50 a day, with the privilege of taking in non-resident students. I told the members of the Board there that I would decide within a week whether I would accept their offer.

"I then returned to Johnstown and found Mr. League at home. He and Mr. Johnson met with me on Thursday, March 22; we had a long interview. Mr. League asked me many questions. After much discussion it was finally agreed that they pay me $2.75 a day for the summer term of three months, on trial, and if I proved a success, they would pay me $3.00 a day for the fall
term. They said the school building was in too poor condition for use in winter but that they would grant me the use of it, free of rent, for my select school the coming winter, providing I would repair it at my own expense. The tuition of all non-resident students who would attend the public school would have to be paid into the school treasury. We closed the contract. School was to begin April 9, 1866."

In 1866 Johnstown was a little village with a population of two or three hundred. Its site had originally been covered with a dense forest, and through it ran from southwest to northeast a small stream, bordered by prickly ash. The region is a watershed plateau about 900 feet above sea level, the village drainage being to the north into Lake Erie, while but a few miles south the waters flow into the Ohio river, thence to the Gulf.

In the early thirties pioneer woodsmen had settled in the township; on the highway two miles to the south, which at that time furnished the only line of communication across this part of the state, there were here and there small settlements. In 1852, just fourteen years before Mr. Lehr began teaching in Johnstown, the Ohio and Indiana Railroad (later the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne, and Chicago division of the Pennsylvania railroad), laid a track westward through these dense forests to Chicago. The sides of the track were lined for miles and miles with fire wood. As all of their engines burned wood, about every ten miles the train would stop to take on wood and water.

As soon as the railroad had been completed, one of the large land owners of this region persuaded Mr. S. M. Johnson to locate a sawmill near the tracks. Around this sawmill grew a settlement named Johnstown after the owner of the mill. Later other lumber men were attracted here by the vast resources of timber. In July, 1855, to avoid the confusion which resulted from the existence of an older town in Licking County by the name of Johnstown, the postal authorities changed the name of the postoffice to Ada, but the railroad did not change the name of the station to Ada until October, 1867.

The town had gradually increased in importance, because of its timber resources, until, at the time Mr. Lehr came to Johnstown, there were two sawmills, a stave-mill and barrel factory, a gristmill, a planing mill, a tannery, and an ashery. A little later a mill, manufacturing parts for furniture made of walnut only, was established.

Johnstown was thus a typical frontier town—there were no sidewalks save where occasional railroad ties were laid down to serve the purpose. There were five or six stores and four or five saloons. Here large bills were paid usually by trading walnut logs and stumps, staves and heading, which were accepted by the stores in lieu of cash. For small change, hoop-poles, muskrat skins, and raccoon skins were used. For fuel people used only the best beech, ash, sugar, and hickory. Deer were plentiful in the woods, and in the marshes on the east and south there were wild ducks and turkeys; gray squirrels and raccoons were also plentiful, and occasionally one saw a black squirrel.
The lumber mills employed many hands, some of them earning as much as six or eight dollars a day. Thousands of barrels were shipped out, a large proportion of them being sold to the oil industry which was beginning its rapid expansion at that time. One of the principal purchasers was the firm of Andrews, Clark and Company of Cleveland, which later became William Rockefeller and Company, a fore-runner of Standard Oil. Shares in Standard Oil, when Mr. Lehr came to the village, were on sale at the mills for thirty-five dollars a share, but few, if any, of the townspeople bought them. The risk was considered too great.

There was one church building—the Presbyterian, but as all the citizens had been liberal in helping to pay for it, the owners were liberal in granting the use of it to other denominations as need arose. Four or five years later the Methodists erected a large two-story building, followed in turn by the Baptists and Catholics, and later, other denominations.

The social life of the village centered largely around the church. Church “sociables” and festivals of various kinds were frequent and were well patronized. There were also many parties, dances and other social gatherings. Wages were good and the people had plenty of money. The community was strongly Democratic, influenced no doubt, by the fact that a large number of Southerners had settled here during and after the Civil War.

Such was this community of Johnstown in the woods of northwestern Ohio, when Henry S. Lehr entered into a contract to teach in its public school, with the privilege of conducting during vacation a “select school”. This “select school” was to be the fore-runner of a Normal School that was to become a leading center for the training of teachers in the state of Ohio.

After closing the contract with the Board of Education Mr. Lehr returned to Wayne County to his father’s home. Before leaving Johnstown he had learned that the next teachers’ examination for that vicinity would be held April 7. At that time no state certificates were granted, and the longest period for which county certificates were given was two years. He returned to Johnstown, April 4, to be in readiness for the examination. Continuing his narrative:

“On Saturday morning at an early hour, with a driver, I started to Kenton, the county seat, a distance of sixteen miles, in what was styled a ‘one-horse wagon’. After we had gone about two miles over the muddy corduroy road, the wagon broke down and we had to return to town. I went to the livery barn and asked for the best team they had to make a quick drive to Kenton. When I finally reached the schoolroom where the examination was being held, it was twenty minutes past eleven. The examiner said it was too late for me to enter for the test as they were then on the third branch. I explained about our accident and asked that inasmuch as I was to begin teaching in Johnstown on Monday, they permit me to take the examination. After some hesitation they granted my request.

“I completed the work of the morning about five
minutes before twelve. I trust I may be permitted to say, without being considered boastful, that when I handed in my papers the examiners and the other applicants appeared to be somewhat surprised at the short time it had taken me to prepare my papers.

"During the noon recess, I found on inquiry that the teachers’ county institute had been discontinued during the war and had not yet been resumed. At the close of the afternoon session I asked permission to say a word to the teachers in regard to reorganizing. Permission was granted and arrangements were made to hold an institute the following summer. I was authorized to secure an instructor and engaged Thomas W. Harvey, the author of Harvey’s Grammar. We had an excellent institute.

"On Monday morning, April 9, 1866, I went to the little frame schoolhouse to begin what I expected, by God’s help, to be my life’s work. The seats in the building were of all sizes and shapes. There was a small blackboard back of the teacher’s desk. The teacher of the previous term had bequeathed me three rods of different lengths. I was informed that the whips were of different sizes to correspond with the height of the pupils; I surmised that the school was ‘graded’. My first act was to carry out the whips.

"At half past eight in the morning I called the school to order, opening the morning’s work by reading a short portion of God’s Word and offering a brief prayer. About two weeks after I began teaching, the directors told me that some objected to the morning devotions. I proposed to them that I would open at eight o’clock so that those who preferred to remain away might do so and come at half past eight. The directors agreed to the proposition. In a short time all the pupils came to chapel.

"Not having an assistant I found it necessary to classify the school as much as possible to reduce the work. There were 127 pupils enrolled, with an average attendance of 87. This included the pupils from the country district, about two miles square, surrounding the village.

"I found that in Johnstown, as in other places I had taught, little attention had been paid to the ‘Queen’s English’. The second week of the term I had all the pupils of all the grades lay aside their readers. Beginning in McGuffey’s Spelling Book with words of three letters I taught them the use of the diacritical marks.

"One of the lessons contained the words, few, pew, new, and the like. To teach the correct pronunciation of the word ‘new’, I wrote on the board the sentence: ‘A few fools sat in a new pew.’ I called on several pupils to read it. Shouts of laughter pealed through the room. One of the pupils spoke out and said: ‘Teacher, that is great!’ In assigning spelling and reading lessons I would designate from four to six words to be defined at the next recitation in order to teach the pupils the use of the dictionary and to enlarge their vocabulary.

"After I had been teaching about a month one of the citizens met me on the street; his face was red with ex-
citement. He said, 'Teacher, of what nationality are you?' I told him that I was born in Ohio, but that my parents had moved to this state from Pennsylvania.

"I thought you were some foreigner or Pennsylvania Dutchman," he said.

"I asked, 'Why so?'

"His answer was something like this: 'I can't teach any more in the presence of my children without being laughed at and criticised. I have to school and know how to pronounce such words as log, hog, God, and the like.'

"I asked him if he had spelling books for sale in his store. He said he had. I went with him to his store and showed him the words with the diacritical marks. He replied, 'I don't care a . . . . for the books; custom makes law. I think your theory and teaching are all wrong.' But in less than another month he was fully converted to the use of the dictionary and became one of the very best friends of the Normal School project.

"My methods of teaching grammar, geography, and arithmetic differed from those of former teachers and caused much talk in the village, pro and con. I taught the verb by means of the tense tree, which I had devised a few years before. Geography was taught by the topic system; we used Goodrich's Geography—the best geography ever published up to that time, but too expensive for use by the general public. For simple lessons in science I procured a glass prism to produce the colors of the rainbow on the wall, and also illustrated with simple apparatus the lesson in the old *Third Reader*, 'How a Fly Walks on the Ceiling'.

"To accommodate all the pupils there were recitations before school, at recess, at noon, and after school—and on into the night. There was much enthusiasm among the pupils and also among the citizens. Some wanted me to start the Normal School at once. But I knew that I must have a larger clientele, such as would enable me to hire assistant teachers before beginning the project. The first summer term continued twelve weeks, and after a month's vacation the second term began. Many new pupils entered; it was necessary to employ an assistant to teach the little children."

Looking forward to his first "select school" Mr. Lehr repaired the school building for winter use and built a wood shed on the school premises.

The president of the school board now proposed that if Mr. Lehr would pay for the sawing of the boards, the laying of the walk, and for the nails, he would furnish the lumber for four blocks of sidewalk on Main Street. Mr. Lehr accepted the offer and Mr. Johnson cut some large elm trees which he sawed into planks two feet wide. With these a much-needed walk was laid—the first in the village.
CHAPTER FIVE

LAYING FOUNDATIONS
1866-1870

"What man has climbed the summits and victorious reached the goal,
Who has not carried with him, in his rise, a woman's soul?
Perhaps it is a mother, or a sister, or a friend,
Perhaps it is a daughter who has helped him to ascend,
Perhaps it is the woman who has shared his secret life—
Has stood beside him in the fiercest test—his loyal wife.
Alone he seems to stand, upon the glowing summit there,
But there's a woman back along the trail he made, somewhere.

In days gone by when Dr. Lehr was busy as could be
With O. N. U. in tender infancy upon his knee,
Who served for all the hosts of guests who thronged him in his prime
And spread the banquet table with its feasts from time to time,

Who toiled with earnest effort tho by nature never strong,
And gave the best part of her life to help the cause along?
This frail but fearless woman, she should live in this school's heart,
For in the making of its fame she surely had a part."

—W. B. W.
friends of his intention. The minister was cold and indifferent and but few of the members spoke to him. That evening he united with a Disciple Church nearby. Mt. Union College, where he received his education, was a Methodist institution, but he maintained his adherence to the doctrine of the church of his choice.

Mr. Lehr had entered heartily into the services of the churches already existing in the village but on investigation he found that there were a number of people in Johnston and the surrounding country, perhaps two dozen or more, who had at one time belonged to the Disciple Church. He gathered them together, and with the help of an evangelist, organized them into a church, in which for many years he was the guiding spirit. He served as janitor, treasurer, teacher, elder, and often as preacher. To him his church duties were sacred; Sunday morning found him in his place on the front seat without fail, and in the midst of many other pressing duties he was a regular attendant at the midweek prayer meeting.

Until the summer of 1868 there was but one Sunday school in the town—the Presbyterian. During the fall of that year the Methodists and Baptists also organized Bible schools. The Methodists held theirs at two o'clock in the afternoon; the Baptists met at nine in the morning; the Presbyterians held theirs at noon. Mr. Lehr was superintendent of the Methodist and Baptist, and taught a class in each of the three. Later when his own church organized a Sunday school it convened in the afternoon; he was then obliged to withdraw from the Methodist group.

His responsibilities would have been less had he chosen to unite with one of the churches already established. Most of the “brethren” lived in the country and came to town on Sunday to spend the entire day at the church services. Often as many as nineteen or twenty or even more would follow “Brother” Lehr through the gate to his little home and eat dinner at his table. As for the preachers—they were itinerants and always stayed at the Lehr home. But no matter how great the labor or inconvenience, he found great joy in his church work and was never so happy as when he was expounding the Word of God or leading someone “into the church”.

When Mr. Lehr was teaching and “boarding ’round” he had formed warm friendships with many charming girls but had not considered an engagement with any of them as he desired to finish his college course before marrying. At Mt. Union College, however, he had made the acquaintance of a young lady of wealth, delightful personality, and very high intellectuality. They had much correspondence and were practically engaged, although Mr. Lehr’s mother was opposed on the ground that the young lady was not domestically inclined. After the war a trifling circumstance separated them but Mr. Lehr always held her in very great esteem. Had he married her he likely would have gone to some eastern city and entered upon a business career.

It will be recalled that when he relinquished the study of medicine he went to a small village near Alliance, Ohio, to teach. While there he was attracted to one of his pupils by her winsome ways and lovely face. It was while teach-
ing there, too, that he fully decided to delay no longer in starting upon his chosen career. Looking forward to the building up of an institution of learning, he wanted a home—he felt the need of a helpmeet. He made the matter a subject of much prayer. He was old-fashioned enough to want a wife who would make wifehood and home-making a career. Such a one he believed he would find in this sunny young woman whom he met daily in the schoolroom; nor was he mistaken in his choice.

Albina Johnson Hoover, of Quaker parentage, was the fifth child in a family of six children. She was a mere slip of a girl, graceful in form and lovely in feature. Her father was Pennsylvania Dutch; her mother was of English descent. They were sturdy, hard-working prosperous farmers. On October 30, 1866, this frail, delicate girl, not yet sixteen, joined her life to that of Henry S. Lehr. They were married in the comfortable farm home of her parents by Dr. O. S. Hartshorn, president of Mt. Union College. After a brief visit with Mr. Lehr’s relatives in Wayne County, they went to Johnstown, arriving on November 9th. It was the bride’s first trip away from home.

In April, when Mr. Lehr took charge of the schools, he had experienced difficulty in finding a place to board. There were few of the townspeople who cared to bother with roomers and boarders. After repeated efforts he had finally secured room and board at four dollars a week through the graciousness of a young physician who kindly offered to share his room with the new teacher. It was now, of course, necessary to find a new place. The young cou-

ple found the village hotel filled with traveling salesmen, but finally they secured a small room for the night in a private home. Next morning they secured rooms for light housekeeping with Mrs. S. M. Johnson whose husband was the president of the Board of Education; here they remained until the following April when they moved into their own home.

After securing rooms the young couple immediately started for the county seat as Mr. Lehr was on the program at the Teachers’ Institute that day. The morning had been balmy and pleasant but it began to rain in the late afternoon just as they were starting for home. The corduroy roads were full of deep holes and it was necessary to drive very slowly. The travelers were thoroughly soaked long before the five hour drive was ended.

Mr. Johnson’s large farmhouse was about twenty rods from the road. As there was no place to tie the team which was restless and would not stand, Mr. Lehr helped his little bride out of the buggy and went on to the livery barn, leaving Mrs. Lehr to go on alone through the tall trees to find the path to the house she had seen for the first time that morning—and that for only a few minutes. When she alighted from the buggy she stepped out into water a foot deep. Through this, guided by the light Mrs. Johnson had placed in the window, she waded to the fence and then crept cautiously on the wet rails to the house. As a result of the exposure of this trip Mrs. Lehr, always of delicate health, took a cold which proved a heavy drain on her strength.
In a few days Mr. and Mrs. Lehr began housekeeping and ate their first meal together—but not alone; three prospective students from out-of-town had come to make arrangements to attend the select school and they, of course, took dinner with the teacher. That first meal, with student guests, was a forecast of one type of service Mrs. Lehr was to render to her husband in the building up of his life work. For years following, the doors of the Lehr home swung open night and day. This home was hotel, reception room, hospital, dietetic kitchen, banquet hall. Quietly, kindly, gently, this frail woman attended to her duties with a carefulness and dispatch that kept even pace with the growth of her husband’s work.

She united with the church her husband had organized and became an active, energetic member. Because of her constitutional frailty, which was aggravated by a long siege of pneumonia following the cold she had taken on that long ride in the rain, she was for a number of years in frail health. Nevertheless, she did not allow her ill health to interfere with her husband’s plans or impede his work.

The honeymoon of this young couple was shortened by Mrs. Lehr’s illness and by the beginning of the first select school on November 12. Mr. Lehr bent all of his energies to make this first attempt a success. The tuition was six dollars for the term; and though only such as could read fluently in the Fourth and Fifth Readers were admitted, the enrollment was fifty-six.

The select school closed the first of March, and on the following Monday the regular term of the public school began, and was in session for six months. (Because of the condition of the school building in Johnstown, public school sessions were held only in summer.) The second term of the select school opened on August 12 and continued till October 18. The enrollment was thirty-eight, most of the students being country-school teachers who then left for their own schools, their winter term opening about that time.

During the summer the town had started to build a brick school building of four rooms; and though but two rooms were ready for use in the autumn, the public school opened for a winter term. That winter (1867) Mr. Lehr taught eight hours every school day without extra pay.

The new teacher had taught his pupils by new methods; he had created in them a desire for an education; he had introduced new ideas among them. Perhaps one of the most interesting of these new ideas was the literary society. During his first term he had organized a society—the Ciceronian—for literary training, but in the beginning it had not proved popular. The students, especially the boys, had not taken kindly to it. They joined the society at the teacher’s solicitation but sat back and listened as the teacher, to set an example, took part in debate, declamation, and composition at every meeting of the society. The program consisted of recitations, essays, debates, and a humorous paper. Failure to perform in turn cost each member a fine of five cents. Most of the boys preferred to pay the fine which was used to purchase candles to light the room rather than to perform. Tin candle-holders were hung about the walls,
but there was an oil lamp on the teacher's desk. The teacher was critic, treasurer, and janitor.

Little by little the interest in the literary society increased. The pupils began to look forward to performing on the stage. The society paper became spirited and peppy; the debate became animated and logical; there were orations in which ancient and modern heroes were eulogized or satirized, as the case might be; vocal music was added to the program. People began to come to the meetings of the society from great distances, as far as twenty miles—a great distance in those days when horses and buggies furnished the transportation. A new literary world was being opened up to the people of this community. Many a young man, fired by the debates, declamations, and orations he heard at that literary society, worked earlier and later that he might have money to attend Mr. Lehr's select school and become a member of that society and learn to speak in public.

As the need for equipment of various kinds for the school became apparent, literary entertainments, festivals, and mush and milk suppers were given to raise the necessary funds. The citizens responded willingly. There was enough money raised during the second year of his teaching to purchase outline maps, a few books, and a magnetic globe which was just then in vogue.

It was found that the state authorities, some years before, had purchased a set of books for each school district under the caption of the Ohio School Library. Many of the books had been lost; Mr. Lehr searched through the town and found some of them scattered here and there. From these as a nucleus, he gradually built up a small library.

Mr. Lehr was beloved by all of his pupils and by most of the citizens. However, as is the case with men of pronounced convictions, he encountered some opposition. In those days of beginnings he had one strong political opponent. In his "Reminiscences" he wrote of this:

"A few months after my arrival in Johnstown the postmaster, a prominent citizen, called me aside for a private talk. He said, 'I see by the papers you take that you are a Republican. This community is Democratic. If you want to stay and build up a school it might be well to change your politics.' I told him I could not change, but promised to vote for two Democrats on the county ticket in the coming election.

"The fall of 1867 witnessed a bitter political fight in Ohio. There was an amendment to be voted on giving a franchise to colored men of lawful age and citizenship the same as white men. Now, this same citizen who had become a school director in the spring election warned me not to vote 'aye' on the amendment. He said, 'The people of this town will not tolerate a teacher who will vote to give the 'nigger' the ballot. No 'nigger worshipper' can teach in Johnstown.' I tried to avoid the question. He and others tried to exact a promise of me not to vote for the amendment. I replied that I would vote as I thought right and foolishly voted an 'open ticket'.
“About two weeks before the election the following spring the two Republican members of the School Board called to see me. They told me there was a movement on foot to elect a new director who would oppose me. Mr. Johnson was moving away from the village to engage in the manufacture of paper. The Democrats were in the majority and the fight waxed hot, but my good friend, the popular young doctor, with whom I had roomed when I first came to the village, ran as an independent candidate on my behalf, and thus split the Democratic ticket so that the Republicans won. One of my Democratic friends came to me and said, ‘You made a mistake last fall in openly voting to give the negro the ballot, but I'll vote to keep you; you are all right in the schoolroom.’”

The select school sandwiched in between the public school terms had now become a permanent feature, but it was not very “select” as anyone who wanted to come, young or old, was welcomed. The tuition was still six dollars a term, but cripples who were poor and also orphans were admitted free. There were sixty-three pupils in the select school during the fall term of the second year. Mr. Lehr taught ten hours a day. When the public school opened, a number of non-resident pupils remained to enter the high school. Some of the citizens began to object to having so many non-resident students in school but the great majority of people said, “It is bringing money to town, and we want that Normal School that has been so much talked about.”

Some began to lose faith in the project because of the delay in starting it, but Mr. Lehr felt that his work in the select school was not yet well enough known to enable him to maintain a self-sustaining private school throughout the entire year. Besides that, he knew there was much earnest work yet to be done, not only in the schoolroom but outside of it as well. This teacher expected large numbers of young men to come from far and near to his Normal School; he knew that they would be under his special supervision and care, not only when in the classroom, but also on the street.

One of the things outside the schoolroom which Mr. Lehr wanted to do was to reduce the influence of the saloons. Up to this time little attempt had been made in northwestern Ohio to limit the sale of intoxicating liquor. In most small towns at that time the saloon was the popular meeting place for men, young and old. Mr. Lehr said:

“In this village there were five saloons and liquor could be bought at one of the general stores. Street fights were of common occurrence. I was greatly interested in the moral condition of the town and began to work against the saloon and kept at it.

“Late in the fall of 1868 we had a kind of ‘anti-saloon crusade’ in Ada. A number of men and women volunteered to help. Our plan was this: Beginning at nine in the morning groups of women were to go by ‘reliefs’ to the saloons and remain there all day—until nine o’clock at night. They generally met at our home and went from there. Certain men were to watch to see that the women
were not insulted. The movement had its effect, but the sentiment in favor of the saloon was too strong at that day to accomplish what we had hoped to do. About four years later 'Mother Stewart' conducted her celebrated crusades against the saloon. She improved on our plan by adding singing and praying to the movement and had better results."

At the spring election of 1869 it was agreed that the election of the School Board should be non-partisan. At the first meeting of the Board Mr. Lehr was re-elected superintendent for two years at a salary of eighty dollars a month. The increase of a dollar a day came without his asking. He was still permitted to use the school building in the early autumn for his select school and to receive "foreign" students, but the tuition of the non-residents, while the public school was in session, continued to be paid into the school treasury. In the select school in the autumn of 1869 there were eighty-two students, and the following spring a still larger number of students entered for special work, chiefly country school teachers.
CHAPTER SIX

THE NORTHWESTERN OHIO NORMAL SCHOOL

1870-1871

“He built his school here on the plains where the village was nothing more than a wide place in the road, but here the world beat a pathway to his door.” — P. H. Welshimer, Minister, Canton, Ohio.

It was now four years since Henry S. Lehr had settled in this community. Already the town had become an educational center for the county and surrounding districts. Mr. Lehr believed that the time was at hand to begin to think about starting the Normal School. Some of the citizens were greatly interested in his project, but few of them were financially able to give him much assistance. There was less money in the town than there had been a few years before. The sawmills and the barrel factory

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which had brought much money to the village just after the
war were running only on part time, as the supply of tim-
ber that had seemed limitless was already almost exhausted.
Many of the lumbermen had moved away. It looked as
though the citizens could not do much toward the erection
of a building.

Several other towns in northwestern Ohio, seeing the
rapid growth of the select school and the number of non-
resident students attending the public school in Ada, had
become interested in the bustling little school teacher. The
Board of Education of Findlay, a town about twenty miles
to the north, was in correspondence with him. In June
(1870) he went there to investigate their proposition. He
knew there was wealth there and that he would be likely
to secure valuable financial support from a town of its size
if he could locate his Normal School there.

When it became known in Ada that he was definitely
considering an offer elsewhere, there was great consterna-
tion; the citizens gathered together in the town hall and
sent a committee to escort Mr. Lehr to the meeting.
Amidst great enthusiasm he was told emphatically that he
must not think of going away. They said they were now
ready to help him and asked him to put in writing just
what he wanted the town of Ada to do. In a week or so he
presented his proposition to a committee of the citizens that
was appointed to consider it.

His first proposal was that the school should be free
from all sectarian and political bias. To that all of the citi-
zens could agree. As his second point Mr. Lehr insisted
that the building should cost not less than $6,500. Of this
amount he asked that the citizens of Ada and vicinity
subscribe the sum of $3,000. His proposal that they sub-
scribe so large a sum aroused much discussion.

The citizens loved their little teacher; they had the
greatest respect for his work; they believed in him; they
wanted him to stay; but some of them—the most of them
—hesitated to assume a financial responsibility of such
proportions. Many questions arose. How was the money to
be raised? In case it were raised, who was to have the man-
agement of the construction of the building, the town or
Mr. Lehr? If the building were erected who was to own
it? If any profits should later accrue to the school manage-
ment, who was to receive them?

All through the summer of 1870 the matter was dis-
cussed from every angle. The citizens talked about it
among themselves, in called meetings, and on the streets.
Some of them went to other towns to talk the matter over
with disinterested business and professional men, and with
various college students and professors. It was found to be
not uncommon for an academy building to be erected by
popular subscription; but in every case, the academy was
certain to be controlled either by some church or by the
town itself. Colleges were sponsored by some church, both
in the matter of the erection of buildings and in the man-
agement of the institution.

The citizens discovered that the Normal School idea was
rather a new one and not well-established in the public
mind, and that only a few such schools were in existence
outside of New England; there seemed to be a doubt in the minds of some educators as to the practicability of schools devoted mainly to training teachers.

Another feature that aroused much discussion was that Ada's ingenious little teacher insisted that he was to be not only the manager but also the treasurer of the school, and that he was to be permitted to conduct it according to his own idea of what a Normal School should be. There was, it was true, a successful privately-owned Normal School at Lebanon, Ohio, which had been in operation since 1855, under the leadership of Professor Alfred Holbrook, the father of all the Normal Schools of the Middle West. It was found on investigation that Professor Holbrook's first building at Lebanon had descended to him gratuitously through a series of events in educational history so that the situation there offered no parallel, so far as the erection of a building was concerned, to the problem faced at Ada.

Finally, sometime in the fall, the contract was signed. The financial basis agreed upon stipulated that Mr. Lehr was to contribute $4,000 personally. The citizens as individuals were to donate a campus and to contribute $4,000—not as a gift, but as a loan. Mr. Lehr was to bind himself to refund, in five years from the time he commenced to use the building, all subscriptions exceeding twenty dollars by a payment of ten per cent of the principal annually—no interest to be computed on the principal. Subscriptions under twenty dollars were to be considered donations.

A stock company was formed by the subscribers; a subscription of twenty dollars entitled a subscriber to a vote.

Trustees of the stock company were appointed to assist Mr. Lehr in drawing up plans and specifications for a building; the trustees were to handle all funds and to have the management of the constructive work. The trustees were to select suitable locations which could be obtained at reasonable terms, one of which was to be selected by ballot of the stockholders. Mr. Lehr pleaded earnestly with the citizens for a campus of five acres, but they were certain so large a campus would never be needed.

The fall term of the select school began August 9, 1870, with an enrollment of 119. Every available room and garret in town was rented. Two years earlier Mr. Lehr had begun to buy at public sales old stoves, bedsteads, chairs, tables, pots, kettles, and skillets and had stored them in his woodhouse or where he could, that he might be able to accommodate students who preferred self-boarding. Now all of these were in use. Having foreseen from his correspondence the prospect of a large attendance, he knew that he would need a competent assistant teacher. Therefore, some weeks before the term began, he wrote to Mt. Union College and asked for the names of three of their best graduates of that year. From them he selected as his permanent assistant, Mr. B. F. Niesz.

In speaking of these days Mr. Lehr said:

"I was now at the most critical period of my life. My lot had been cast into a remarkable community. I believe, that taking into consideration the population, there was not a community in Ohio that had so many intelligent, progressive, enterprising, enthusiastic, liber-
al citizens as there were in Ada and vicinity in the '60's and '70's. No teacher engaged in such an enterprise before or since ever had such material to work on and with as I had. Joseph Cook in one of his lectures said, and said truly, that Greece in two hundred years produced more great men in various lines than all the rest of the world did in two thousand years. The students of the '70's formed a brilliant galaxy of noble young men and women that would enable any ordinary teacher to make a good record.

"Nearly every evening throughout that fall term there were committee meetings in regard to the Normal School project. I would meet the committees after teaching hours were over, which were from five in the morning until eight at night, and after that would answer my mail. During that entire term I did not average four hours of sleep a day; that term continued twelve weeks as the public school was delayed in opening because of the construction of new rooms. Had I not made preparation in former years I could not have taught ten hours each school day and frequently twelve or more branches; the small classes frequently had but thirty minutes for recitation. I had committed to memory Ray's *Arithmetic*, *Practical* and *Higher*, two grammars, Greene's *Analysis of Sentences*, nearly every book in geometry, the names and locations of all the mountains, rivers, seas, capes, bays, and gulfs given in the ordinary school geography, and I had physiology, logic, Latin grammar, and several other branches quite well in hand. I seldom found it necessary to use the book in the classroom."

As soon as an agreement was reached between Mr. Lehr and the town, at least six committees were put to work getting subscriptions for the building. The large attendance in the select school stimulated their efforts; in five days the solicitors for funds reported that the subscriptions amounted to over $5,500 on the building and that more than $500 on the campus had been pledged if the "Dobbins site", consisting of two and one-half acres, on the main highway through the village were selected. The executive committee, which had been elected by the citizens, now called a meeting of the subscribers. The reports of the solicitors were received with shouts of enthusiasm. Four locations had been proposed, one to the east of town (known as "flax hill") which was Mr. Lehr's preference; one to the northwest; one to the northeast; and the Dobbins site on the main highway, which was the one finally selected. Each location with the exception of the latter offered five acres. Parties financially interested tried to have Mr. Lehr give his preference, but he kept silent on the choice of location, for he deemed it best to let the stockholders decide that as had been agreed upon.

Mr. Lehr had now contracted to furnish $4,000 and had only a few hundred dollars to his credit in the bank. The only course open to him was to take associates or partners. He approached a number of young men whom he knew would make able teachers and good associates in such an undertaking. Finally, Mr. B. F. Niesz, his assis-
tant teacher, and Mr. J. G. Park, who had been a student in the select school since the autumn of 1868, consented to become partners, each of them agreeing to contribute one-third of the money he had promised to furnish. Each member of the new partnership, which was known as H. S. Lehr and Company, (not incorporated), pledged $700 individually besides the $4,000 subscribed as a company. The partnership also was to purchase furniture and other equipment such as seats, desks, chairs, a bell, blackboards, an organ for chapel, a piano for the music teacher, chandeliers, and other necessities.

The vote of the stockholders for the location of the site took place sometime in September. There was much excitement. Each section of the town worked hard to secure the location of the building. The competition was intense. The night of the election it looked as though the north side would win. When the excitement was at white heat, thirty votes ($600) were deposited for the Dobbins site. It was at once suspected and later ascertained that Mr. Lehr's new partners had subscribed the money. Of this circumstance Mr. Lehr wrote:

"Although I had no part in the six-hundred-dollar subscription I was blamed for the transaction. There was almost a riot. I was howled at and hissed. Although at heart in favor of the east site, to quiet the excitement and restore the voting, I authorized my friend, the young doctor of whom I have spoken before, to subscribe and vote one hundred dollars for the northwest location. My effort was useless. The voting stopped. I was roundly, soundly, and fearfully denounced. Although I had been a citizen of the village over four years, was an official in three Sunday schools, had contributed liberally to all of the churches, even helping to support the different pastors, had paid my debts—yet the morning after the vote of the stockholders I found that I was 'mean and tricky, dishonorable, dishonest, untruthful'.

"There was a 'hot time' in the little town every night at every store. It was 'hot' in the day time. But a short month before, I was the 'good angel' of Ada. How glad all were that Lehr had come to Ada! Now many of my former friends would not recognize me. I was heartsick. My associates had a moral and legal right to vote as they pleased; no one blamed them. Lehr had to bear all the blame. The following words of Channing were of some comfort to me: 'He is the most successful who bears the heaviest burdens cheerfully; who is calmest and most fearless under menaces and frowns; whose reliance on truth, on virtue, on God, is most unfaltering.' And these words from the Bible: 'He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty' (Prov. 16:32). It was years before all of the northsiders became reconciled, some perhaps never did.'

Mr. Lehr never changed his mind as to his choice of the location. He believed the site to the east of town to be preferable not only because it offered a campus of five acres but also because there was an elevation there. From that position the building could have been seen by passengers
on the Pennsylvania Railroad trains; he considered that would be an advantage from an advertising standpoint. Furthermore, if his desires in that matter had been carried out the town gradually would have moved to the higher ground on the east side rather than to the low ground on the west.

Many of the subscribers declared they would not pay their subscriptions because the building was not located in accordance with their desires. Some of the gentlemen who had been elected as trustees were dissatisfied and about the last of September all of the trustees resigned. The condition of affairs had its influence on the non-resident students and not as many remained for the winter term of the public school as the previous year. There were meetings of groups of citizens nearly every evening. Those in favor of the Normal would invite Mr. Lehr to their meetings. Some time in October or November there was a called meeting of the subscribers at which a new Board of Trustees was elected. The new Board and the "Faculty", as the proprietors were styled, had a meeting and it was agreed that the new Board should try to collect the money, let the contract for erecting the Normal School building, and see that it was erected according to specifications. This appeared to be the desire of the majority of the subscribers. The contract was given, one of the influential citizens, Mr. Abraham Ream, going security for the contractor. According to the contract the building was to be completed by August 1, 1871.

During the winter and spring terms of 1870-1871, in addition to his teaching and other duties, Mr. Lehr was finishing his college work, preparatory to taking examinations in order to receive his Bachelor's degree. He should have graduated from Mt. Union College with his class in 1864, but the war had interrupted. As he had devoted himself to teaching immediately after the close of the war his graduation had been still further delayed. He lacked only political economy, international law, and two terms in Greek. The president of Mt. Union College kindly granted him permission to prepare his work at home and take the examinations with the class. When a student, Mr. Lehr, like all college students, had eagerly looked forward to graduation day; but when at last that day came, he found it difficult to leave his own work even to attend the commencement exercises. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree at Mt. Union College with the class of 1871, seven years behind his own class.

With the prospect of the Normal School, so long looked forward to and planned for, becoming a reality, Mr. Lehr was preparing his first catalogue for the school year 1870-1871. When issued, it was a fifteen-page pamphlet. The title page read: Catalogue of the Northwestern Ohio Normal School at Ada, Ohio. In it were included the names of the students of the select school in the fall of 1870 and those of the non-resident students enrolled during the winter and spring term of the public school, making a total of 131.

The school terms were scheduled to accommodate the teachers of the nearby communities. The fall term
from August 14 to November 17 was designed especially
to suit the country school teacher who would need to pre-
pare for his winter school. (Few district school teachers
of that period had more than an elementary education, and
some were poorly equipped even in the common branches).
The winter term from November 27 to March 16 was in-
tended to appeal to the farmers' sons. The spring term
from March 26 to June 15 was expected to attract those
who were to teach summer schools in the country. It was
expected, too, that some teachers would come for review
of the common branches, and for special work in teacher
training during the Normal term or "summer school" from
June 18 to July 27; some advanced students had already
asked for instruction in major branches of study during
that term.

It was confidently hoped and believed that some of the
students would remain throughout the entire year and en-
roll in the four-year course which was presented. This
course was more than equivalent to the first three years of
the ordinary midwestern college of that period. All classes
recited five hours a week, with a fifty-five minute recita-
tion period.

A tuition fee of fifty cents per week was charged for all
the common branches (grammar, orthography, geography,
United States history, elocution and arithmetic). For the
advanced studies, Greek, Latin, German, French, higher
mathematics, the sciences, and also bookkeeping and pen-
manship, the tuition was sixty cents a week. For instruction
in music there was an extra fee. Board and room were

advertised at from $3.00 to $3.50 per week, but it was
noted that less expensive board could be had in "clubs".

Mr. Lehr's appeal was not to the wealthy, nor to those
who were able financially to enter a regular liberal arts col-
lege, but to those who yearned for an education and had
little or no opportunity to secure it. For such he created an
opportunity by presenting a practical course of study at a
minimum cost. The following statement regarding teacher
training was made in the first catalogue:

"Since many of our students desire to become thor-
ough and practical teachers, we establish each term spe-
cial classes for such candidates, and drill especially for
that profession. We aim, not only to impart the best
instruction and to have our students independent think-
ers, but also to assist them in acquiring the best modes
of communicating what they know to others. We strive
to combine the practical with the theoretical. In our
normal classes students are called upon to take charge
of classes and drill them as they would the tyro. It is
surprising how soon the novice becomes an adept in the
profession and is enabled to instruct in the various meth-
ods."

On the subject of discipline this remark appeared and re-
mained in every catalogue published thereafter: "The gov-
ernment will be mild and parental, though firm." It was
further stated that "especial attention" would be paid to
the moral welfare of both sexes and that students would be
prohibited from attending places of public resort which had
a "tendency to waste time and money and to corrupt morals."

Nothing else was said about rules. Mr. Lehr had observed that a rule for conduct almost invariably carried with it, in the student's mind, an invitation to break it. On the other hand he feared to dispense with all regulations; at first certain simple requirements were mentioned at chapel, but in a short time even these were discarded.
CHAPTER SEVEN

THE FIRST FOUR YEARS

1871-1874

"There had been two obstacles that had hindered the masses in Northwestern Ohio from securing an education—the high price of tuition and the inflexible curriculum of the college system. Standing head and shoulders above his fellows in vision, Mr. Lebr looked a quarter of a century ahead and leaped over college traditions and customs of a thousand years and broke the barriers that held back the masses from securing an education."—J. W. Zeller, State Commissioner of Public Schools of Ohio, 1909-1911.

The morning of the 14th of August, 1871, the day when the first term of the Northwestern Ohio Normal School was to begin, came before the building was completed. One who entered for the first time that term wrote an account of her experiences for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening day:

\( \text{73} \)
"On nearing the town that Saturday forenoon of August, 1871, just outside the town, almost out in the country, I first saw the imposing, awe-inspiring building, destined to play so great a part in the events of ensuing years. I sometimes wonder whether the present buildings impress the new student as did that one the little girl saw while sitting among bedsticks, cooking utensils, vegetables, and what not, as her patient father drove his heavily loaded wagon up South Main Street. That this same wagon attracted no special attention is due to the fact that from all directions were coming just such wagons, bringing just such hopeful young people, from just such country homes as she had left early that summer morning.

"Thus, chiefly, the new students came. But they came, and the busy, bustling, little president was happy. Rooms with bare walls and bare floors were waiting for them; soon the simple furniture was set up, and the new life began. Crude and simple were the surroundings, but no one noticed that in the all-engrossing thought of getting an education. There were, it is true, some who boarded in private families; while others, who did not care to board themselves, clubbed together, furnishing provisions to be cooked by some lady at so much per member.

"On Monday morning the school was duly organized. As the Normal building was not yet completed, the eager students found their way to the north end of town to the public school building, then consisting of but four rooms. After devotional exercises, the school was canvassed, each student being asked personally what studies he wished to pursue, the smallest number requisite for a class being one.

"Soon all was in working order. The rules were few. Besides Sunday and Friday evenings, each student had one other evening at his own disposal; other evenings he must be in his room, or report 'absent' at chapel next morning; there must be no communication during study hours, a report of 'perfect' or 'whispered' being also required at roll call.

"Our recitation rooms were all over town. Upstairs in the unfinished Methodist church with plenty of fresh air, several of us recited Whately's Logic to Professor Park, until the cold winds of late autumn drove us to warmer quarters." (M. S. H.)

The new Normal School started out with an enrollment of 147. To accommodate all who came it was necessary to form many classes to fulfill the promises of the catalogue. Mr. Lehr's daily schedule was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 to 6 A. M.</th>
<th>Elocution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 to 7 A. M.</td>
<td>Teachers' Training Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:45 to 8</td>
<td>Chapel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 to 9</td>
<td>Arithmetic (large class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 to 10</td>
<td>Grammar (large class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 11</td>
<td>Geography (large class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 12</td>
<td>Advanced Higher Algebra and Trigonometry. (Two small classes taught at same hour.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dinner
12:45 to 1:30  Advanced Geometry
1:30 to 2  Beginning Geometry
2 to 3  Analysis of Sentences
3 to 4  Two small classes in Latin
4 to 5  Two small classes
Supper
6 to 7  Recreation on the woodpile or in the garden
7 to 7:30  Mental Arithmetic
7:30 to 8  Cicero
(For a few weeks there was a class in Advanced Rhetoric at 4 A. M., but it was later discontinued.)

When the public school opened, as Mr. Lehr was still superintendent and was pledged to give that work two hours a day, it became necessary to make some change in his schedule. The smaller classes then recited later at night. Besides this there were many committee meetings with the trustees and with the subscribers. He also took care of the correspondence and general management of the Normal School. He spent usually from an hour to an hour and a half preparing his lessons for the teacher training classes; he considered that class of the greatest importance. For many weeks he did not average three hours sleep a night.

The anxiety and strain of the past year proved too much for him and he suffered a nervous collapse. While teaching the large class in grammar, he fell from his chair to the floor. The physician who was called pronounced his condition critical and expressed doubt as to his recovery. Many of the students and citizens, too restless and anxious to sleep, burned their lights all night long, waiting for the news the morning would bring. However, he rallied quickly and was soon at work again, but was never quite as strong as before.

Until October the classes recited in various places all over town, some in one hall and some in another; some even in the fire engine room and some in the unfinished Methodist Church building. Some of these improvised places had no facilities for heating, and as cold weather approached, it became inconvenient to use them.

H. S. Lehr and Company decided that they must begin to hold classes in the building even though it was far from completion. They wanted to hold dedicatory services but feared to do so lest they invalidate their contract with the trustees by accepting the building in its unfinished state. Mr. Lehr had a lawyer prepare a memorandum in which it was stated that though they had decided to use the building it was with the express understanding that they waive no rights previously secured to them. With the exception of one trustee who refused to sign, the memorandum was signed and the dedication was announced for October 14.

A student of that period wrote of the "Dedication" as follows:

"The great day came for dedicating the new building, and a great day it was, too, as people came from all the surrounding country, even though dense clouds of smoke hung like a pall over the entire horizon. Great forest fires
were raging in Michigan, Wisconsin, and other northwestern states; Chicago, too, was lying in ruins from the great fire.

"The program of the day began at noon with a great community dinner, or festival as it was called. People came with baskets loaded with food, enough to feed a thousand people.

"In the afternoon there was an excellent address by Judge William Lawrence of Bellefontaine, Ohio, on 'The Value of an Education'.

"A splendid literary entertainment was given at night. Early in the evening the wind began to blow and by nine o'clock there was a furious storm. We could feel the building shiver, and at one time the floor trembled as though it were giving way. The feeling in regard to the location of the building still ran very high, and fights over the matter often had been narrowly averted. Some of the 'Northsiders' had said they wished the building would blow down the night it was finished. When the storm was at its height a number of people left the building—perhaps some who were frightened lest their wishes come true." (S. H. B.)

Following the dedication of the building, numerous difficulties and problems arose. The daily routine of school life was resumed, but at the close of the fall term—about the middle of November—the students who were teachers left for their schools, and during the winter term which followed there were only about forty in attendance. At the same time Mr. Lehr found himself in embarrassing financial circumstances due to having to make good on a note which he had signed for a friend. To cover this Mr. Lehr mortgaged his home, but the amount thus secured was not sufficient. The only way out seemed to be to sell a part of his third interest in the school. He now sold half of that third to Mr. George W. Rutledge with the understanding that the latter was to be exempt from teaching for three years but was to receive five per cent of Mr. Lehr's share of the net proceeds. Years were to pass before Mr. Lehr again would be able to own a commensurate portion of the stock of the Northwestern Ohio Normal School.

Added to his personal difficulties and losses, were those more important connected with the new building. The roof was improperly constructed; it sagged in the center, thus causing the water in time of storm to stand in a deep puddle in the middle of the roof. It leaked so badly that tubs had to be set in the rooms below to catch the water that dripped down. Throughout the entire year the enrollment was smaller than when Mr. Lehr was teaching in the select school. During the summer school, or "Normal term", there were but twelve students; the other teachers left for a vacation at that time, and Mr. Lehr took charge alone.

All attempts to induce the contractor to fulfill his obligations to complete the roof in a satisfactory manner proved in vain.

ed futile. Despite the efforts of the trustees who had charge of the construction work, to get the contractor to fulfill his obligations, he refused to do so and left the village although the building was not yet completed. The contractor's guarantor, Mr. Abraham Ream, one of the staunch friends of the Normal project, had to complete it at a heavy loss to himself. Of the Board of Trustees who had undertaken the oversight of the construction work Mr. Lehr said:

"No set of men ever worked more faithfully, more honorably, and more fairly than did that Board of Trustees. The town of Ada should put up a tablet on the campus of the University in commemoration of the labor of these gentlemen, J. H. Mustard, Cornelius Pugh, William Irvine, and Leonard Vickers. They have never received the thanks and credit due them for the work which they accomplished. They were criticised, malign-ed, abused, misrepresented, but they went about their business and did the best they could."

Mr. Lehr prepared a catalogue for the next year but on account of the leaking of the roof it looked as though the school would have to close. There were few changes in the catalogue. Under the heading of "Remarks" was this statement, "No extra classes formed for less than three members, unless under peculiar circumstances." The circumstances however were generally "peculiar", and classes would be formed for two and occasionally for one member. Students were desired, and the teachers were inclined to be accommodating.

A year had passed since the dedication; the fall term of '72 was about to open with the building as yet unfinished and the roof still leaking; H. S. Lehr and Company sent a communication to the contractor offering terms for settlement, but he returned the notice with an abusive letter. The trustees for the subscribers then shoved up the roof and placed crossbeams on the iron pillars to make the roof convex, but it still leaked. At the close of the fall term when the country school teachers left there were so few students remaining that Professor Park decided to take a year's leave of absence to attend college. This winter—1872—was the "Valley Forge" of the Northwestern Ohio Normal School. The trustees continued their efforts to settle with the contractor but could accomplish nothing. The secretary of the Board finally resigned.

Sometime during the following summer (1873) the trustees for the subscribers made a settlement with the contractor; but H. S. Lehr and Company had not settled with the trustees and refused to settle until the roof was repaired in a satisfactory manner. It notified the citizens that the school would close unless the house was satisfactorily completed. A meeting was called and twenty-seven of the citizens came forward and made a proposition that if H. S. Lehr and Company would complete the building, put on a new roof, and would continue on with the school, they would endeavor to collect the unpaid subscriptions, pay off the liens on the building, and, further, that they would then give the proprietors a receipt in full for all the sub-
scriptions they originally had contracted to refund in a period of five years. The proposition was accepted.

The next morning after the settlement Mr. Lehr and one of his partners started out to borrow money to fulfill their part of the proposition, and within a short time there was a new and satisfactory roof on top of the old one. Of this period Mr. Lehr said:

"As I now remember, those days were the happiest of my life; I now felt sure that one of the cherished objects of my life would prove successful. I had worked faithfully seven long years for my "Rachel", and although I owned only one-sixth of her, yet I had not the least doubt as to the final success of the enterprise."

Mr. Lehr now wrote to his good friend, Mr. Thomas W. Harvey, author of Harvey's Grammar and State Commissioner of Public Schools, and to other educators, telling them of the cheerful outlook. All of them had advised him at different times to give up his project and re-enter public school work. Mr. Harvey had said such a school could never succeed and that private schools which had been attempted before had nearly always failed for lack of buildings and equipment. Others said that towns were always anxious to have someone engage in such an enterprise to boost the community and would encourage it at first, but later on would let the projector stick and help himself as best he could. But these precedents were broken here; the town stood by its contract, and H. S. Lehr and Company fulfilled its part.

The Board of Trustees which had been appointed or elected by the subscribers to erect the building, was now dissolved since it had fulfilled its obligation. The firm name, H. S. Lehr and Company, was discontinued and the proprietors were henceforth known as the "Faculty" of the Northwestern Ohio Normal School. For some reason the other members of the teaching force were habitually known as "Professors", only those who had the management were designated as the "Faculty".

In the autumn of the year of stress that had just passed, Mr. Lehr had organized a prayer-meeting for students, which met for an hour on Saturday nights. The first meeting was held August 17, 1872. For many years he was present at every meeting; in the beginning, sometimes only one other person was there but at the appointed time the meeting was held. The Students' Prayer-meeting grew in numbers, and in later years from two to three hundred students found their way to old Chapel Hall on Saturday evening. There was no compulsion in regard to the attendance; the meeting was merely announced.

The great passion of Mr. Lehr's life was to help others. If he had acquired any truth, his first impulse was to share it with another. From his early youth he had learned to rely on God's help and had found this reliance not misplaced. He therefore desired to share this knowledge with his students. Perhaps, too, the stress and anxiety caused by the unfinished building, the stubborn refusal of the contractor to return and complete his work, the manifest consterna-

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tion of the trustees and guarantor, the dissatisfaction of the
citizens over the long delay, and the perplexity among the
students because of the general confusion of the surround-
ings, caused him to feel afresh his need of Divine help,
and of the fellowship of others in prayer.

At the beginning of the fall term of 1873 a number of
new students entered. Each term the classes in the com-
mon branches recited at fixed periods. That no time be lost
for the student, the classes were organized on the first day
of the term and lessons were assigned; when possible, there
were recitations even the first day. Mr. Lehr was unable to
afford a secretary; therefore while receiving tuition and as-
sisting new students to arrange their schedules, he frequent-
ly attempted to supervise a class at the same time.

On the first day of this term an incident occurred which
is related here to illustrate the shrewdness with which Mr.
Lehr proceeded when attempting to “clear up” a situation.
While busy arranging for new students he was also con-
ducting a class in practical arithmetic. He sent the class to
the board to solve problems, and as opportunity afforded,
he would turn to examine their work. The arithmetic class
was followed by the class in grammar; during that period
he observed that his pocketbook was gone. He spoke to the
class about it. One student said that he had seen a man
whom we shall call “Jones” pass Mr. Lehr’s desk, go to
the window, and throw something out. Another student
declared she had seen a certain person take the pocketbook,
while still another said she had observed such and such a
person in the act.

Mr. Lehr found, upon looking over his receipt book,
that there must have been in the pocketbook $750 or more
in currency besides a number of notes. The next morning
at chapel he announced that a certain student was seen tak-
ing the pocketbook, and if he would return the money and
notes, by dropping them in the post-office before twelve
o’clock that day, there would be no prosecution. He then
publicly asked the different witnesses if they were positive
they had seen the young man take the purse off the table
and if they would testify to it. Each one replied in the af-
firmative; Mr. Lehr, with his usual acumen, made no men-
tion of the fact that each one accused a different person nor
did the witnesses themselves know it. He then stated that
both constables and several deputies were watching the ac-
cused.

He commissioned one of the professors to watch at the
post-office. About eleven o’clock “Jones” was seen going
to the post-office where he dropped a large envelope into
the mail box. It was at once lifted by the professor and was
found to contain just $750 but no notes. The money was
wrapped in a newspaper. Some of the boys entertained
“Jones” down town while the professor started for his
room. The other part of the newspaper was found behind
his trunk and thus the evidence was complete. The guilty
young man was brought to the office, and Mr. Lehr asked
him for the notes. “Jones” took him to a neglected stave
yard and there uncovered the pocketbook containing them.

Three thoroughly reliable and honest persons had declar-
ed positively that they had seen the theft. Only one of
them actually saw it. But for the caution with which the matter was handled, the culprit would have escaped detection.

Several paragraphs from a letter of a student of those days to Mr. Lehr are of interest:

"I entered the Northwestern Ohio Normal School in the fall of 1873 and remained until the spring of 1876. I remember one summer term we had only twenty-six students in the Literary Department, and I do not think we had many over three hundred at any time when I was there. But in those old days, when there were sometimes not more than four to six in a class, and each came into personal contact with the teacher—when each one must have his lesson, for there was no way to shirk—I believe we got more benefit than it is possible to get in larger schools with large classes, even though the equipment in other respects is greater.

"I recall once when you were away the boys tore up the old board walk around the campus and threw it into the street. One professor wanted to search out the culprits and expel them 'instantly.' You laughed it off as a joke, said a new walk was needed, and we all received a lesson in patience.

"I got the impression some way that the school, like myself, was struggling for existence, hoping for better things by and by; that, like myself, it was laying its foundation; and the thought was an inspiration to me. I seemed to have something in common with it. There is something contagious in the struggle of the head of an institution which imparts itself to those about. It permeates the air." (B. W. W.)

In the spring of 1874 the first class was ready for graduation. Great preparations were made for Commencement Day. The Literary Hall was beautifully decorated with flowers and plants. On one side of the platform, a fountain, hidden in a moss-covered mound, sent forth a tiny stream of clear water that trickled down over the moss and ferns and flowers that nested in the sides of the mound. Some enthusiastic student was downstairs pumping as hard as he could to make the fountain function; but no one considered any amount of labor too great to make Commencement Day one long to be remembered.

Crowds of people came from great distances, bringing baskets of lunch which were spread out on the campus under the trees. Lemonade and peanut stands in booths of leafy branches sprung up on the street corners, as by magic, to provide refreshments. Japanese lanterns hung from arches which were erected along the campus walks. There was no football, no baseball, nor other athletic activity; the people had come to listen to the orations of the eleven graduates and to hear the address to the class which on that occasion was given by a Methodist minister.

The program of the day began at nine in the morning with the rendition by the choir of the "Gloria" from Mozart's Twelfth Mass; after prayer the choir sang a "Glee" which was followed by the orations.

On Saturday the entire class partook of a banquet at the
Lehr home, and the first commencement of the Northwestern Ohio Normal School passed into history.

These eleven graduates had finished a course of study comparable to that of the ordinary college of that period. In Latin they had read Virgil, selections from Cicero, Tacitus, Livy, Horace and other authors. Some of them had studied Greek, some of them German. All of them had finished courses in higher algebra, geometry, trigonometry, and astronomy, both descriptive and mathematical; most of them had studied analytics, some of them, calculus, both differential and integral. Included in their curriculum were botany, zoology, geology, natural philosophy, and chemistry, though, it is true, with meager laboratory equipment. Civil government, ancient and modern history, English literature, rhetoric, logic, mental and moral philosophy, political economy, and international law were in the prescribed course. Some of them had studied Butler's *Analogy* and Paley's *Evidences of Christianity*, and all of them had had one term in Lord Kames' *Elements of Criticism*. Each one of them had been called on daily for recitation and discussion, as all classes recited five hours a week.³ In view of the training they had had there was not one of them but was competent to appear on the public platform.

A member of the class who later became State Superintendent of Schools in Ohio, speaking reminiscently of this period, said:

"Mr. Lehr did more to popularize education than any other man in the Northwest. He did not write books to correct the lack of method he saw in town and country schools. He did a greater thing—he showed the people how to put better methods in operation. He declared and taught the principles that the greatest teachers of pedagogy taught a generation later—the triune preparation for teaching: preparation of heart, mind, and body."

Always on the alert, Mr. Lehr soon observed that some of the students found it a hardship to buy books; consequently he devised a plan which became popular at once. Through the kindness of a publishing firm in extending credit, he was enabled to purchase a large supply of text books—arithmetic, grammars, geographies, hundreds of copies of Greene's *Analysis of Sentences*, and also many volumes used in the more advanced classes. In the catalogue of 1874 was this statement: "Text-books and books for reference may be rented at from 10 to 15 cents a term."

In later years a deposit on books was required to insure their return. The tuition, this year, was increased to 60 cents per week for the common branches and to 75 cents per week for advanced studies.

In the autumn of '74 Mr. Niesz, on account of the small income, withdrew and sold his interest to another. From time to time other men entered the partnership, some purchasing a third, or fourth, or even a twelfth interest. Mr. Lehr had not been able to increase his investment and still owned but a sixth interest in the Normal School and therefore received a very small stipend as the net income was divided among the proprietors according to the number of shares each one owned. He was working night

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³ *The teaching force now numbered twelve.*
and day to build up the institution which he had started, with no thought of the inadequate remuneration he was receiving.

The author of a well-known treatise on education* in speaking of the private Normals which arose during the period just following the Civil War, says, "These private low-tuitioned schools had thousands of students and were good money makers for their owners." The Northwestern Ohio Normal School, however, had many years of struggle ahead of it before its proprietors were to realize an income in keeping with the great effort they had to put forth.

* Cubberly, E. P., Public Education in the United States, p. 309.
CHAPTER EIGHT

THE LITERARY SOCIETIES

"These Literary societies, with their friendly competition and rivalry, constituted a mighty force—perhaps the greatest living endowment any institution ever had."—IRVING GARWOOD, PH. D., Western Illinois State Teachers College, Macomb, Illinois.

If there was one student activity that was of exceptional interest to Mr. Lehr, it was literary drill. From his personal experience as a student and from his contacts not only as a teacher, but also in public life, he had observed that the ability to express one's ideas well in public was of supreme importance. The Ciceronian Literary Society which he had formed when he first began to work in the village of Ada, had proved by its success that the prominence he gave to literary work was well directed. With the Normal School now established he decided to discontinue the Ciceronian Society and to form in its stead two new societies. By forming two societies instead of one he expected both to enlarge...
the opportunities for literary drill and to heighten interest in the societies by competition between their members.

On the first Friday night of the opening term of the Northwestern Ohio Normal School (August 18, 1871) he called a meeting of all the students. The meeting was opened by singing, reading from the Bible and prayer. Then Mr. Lehr proceeded to unfold his plan. Some of the students were loath to give up the Ciceroian, but Mr. Lehr explained that there must not be an "old" literary society and a "new" one, but that both societies must be on a par to equalize the competition. The method he suggested for selecting members for the two societies was for the students to elect two captains who should choose members in the old spelling school fashion; this plan did not meet with the approval of the students. Various methods were proposed and finally it was decided to call the roll and let the names of the students fall alternately under "A" and "B". It was agreed that new students, as they entered, should continue to be divided in this manner for four weeks; after that it was to be an open field for a fair fight for members. That fight continued with unabated zeal for more than thirty years. By common consent the four weeks of alternating names was soon discontinued and competition for new members began with the student's arrival—even before.

The relation of the societies to the school resembled somewhat the relation the states of the Union sustain to the Federal government. All rights and privileges respecting student activities which the Faculty did not reserve to themselves were to belong to the societies. The "A's" decided on the name of "Franklin", the "B's", on the name of "Philomathonian", later reduced to "Philomathean". Those whose lot had fallen with the "B's" were disheartened. "A" and "B" were regarded as sustaining the same relation with each other as number one and number two, and people sympathized accordingly; but any presumed inferiority of the "B's" was quickly disproven and the societies soon recognized each other as equals.

A committee was appointed from each society to draft a constitution. To the "B" committee on constitution and by-laws Mr. Lehr loaned a catalogue of the literary society of which he had been a member at Mt. Union College; to the "A" committee he loaned the American Debater, a book in high repute and great demand among newly-formed literary societies of that time. Mr. Lehr said of these committees, "I have never seen more efficient work done by any men and women, nor have I ever heard of any persons who labored more faithfully to accomplish the end in view than did the students of the fall term of 1871."

The Franklins took as their motto: Labor et Auxilio Dei Prosperamus—"By Labor and the Help of God We Prosper". The Philos took as their motto: Labor Omnia Vincit—"Labor Conquers All Things."

To encourage reading the best literature, Mr. Lehr at once divided equally between the two societies his personal library, thus forming a nucleus for the fine libraries which were later to be accumulated by each society.

1 Frequently abbreviated to "Franks" and "Philos", respectively.
The program of each night's exercises as outlined in the societies' constitution was as follows:

Anthem by the Choir
Invocation
Glee by the Choir
Roll Call
Reading of minutes of previous meeting
Miscellaneous business
Music
Parliamentary business (limited to twenty minutes)
Music
Declaming class
Critic's report
Music
Debating class
Critic's report
Music
Miscellaneous debate
Music
"Papers"
Music

The "papers" supplied the fun of the evening. In these, students and teachers often were humorously caricatured. The Philos called their paper the Philo Star; the Franklins called theirs the Franklin Gem. Sometimes at the close there was a play or tableau. The students entered into these literary society programs with as much heartiness and animation, if not more, than the students of later years entered into varsity football; and in the literary work more of them could participate personally than in most forms of athletics.

The societies, too, provided the social activities of the school. Every three or four weeks the members of the societies and their friends spent the evening socially in their respective halls in a general get-together. After a brief program, the rest of the evening was spent in conversation, "couples" promenading up and down the aisles as they talked together. Sometimes there were games, but usually the students found most satisfaction in animated conversation. These gatherings were called "Reunions". From an old catalogue is taken the following from Mr. Lehr's pen:

"That man is a social being is acknowledged by all; and if the young and gay are not allowed to indulge this disposition in a proper way, all the old monastic rules of colleges and convents cannot totally prohibit the indulgence of the same in some way, and in a way which is generally to be deplored, such as is afforded by saloons, card-tables, and the ballroom. These 'reunions' afford opportunities for young men and young ladies to increase their colloquial powers, to study human nature, to appear free and easy in society, and generally to smooth and brighten by mental attrition, in the same manner as 'steel sharpeneth steel.' The reunions are in charge of one or more members of the Faculty, are free from low jestings and other vulgar practices, and can be participated in by the most fastidious moralists."

It was agreed in the conjoint articles of the societies that at the close of each term, excepting the summer term, there
should be two final entertainments, at which admission
was to be charged, one society to give its program on
Thursday night and the other society on Friday night. The
night was to be decided by lot the first time and after that
they were to rotate. Friday night was considered the best
night. One who was present at both entertainments that
first term wrote:

"Then came the entertainments. They were simply
wonderful. For once in our lives we had 'something of
which there was enough'. We had two nights in succes-
sion, the 'B's' first. There were two lengthy pantomimes,
a drama, a debate, orations, essays, recitations, and mu-
sic in choruses, quartets and solos, ad libitum. They be-
gan at 6:00 p.m. and it was about 2:00 a.m., I think,
before they closed."

The value of these literary societies to these young men
and women from the farms cannot be overestimated. In the
history of one of the societies, written by its first president
and later printed in the reference catalogue listing the vol-
umes of its library, is found this note:

"These students were mainly composed of awkward,
quaintly-clad lads and lasses from the country. It seems
that the nervous and ingenious little professor had been
taught to know that 'Necessity is the mother of inven-
tion'; he saw there a chaotic mass of uncouth looking in-
dividuals, with their short jean pantaloons, 'stoga' boots
and shoes, unshorn hair, unshaven downy faces, with no
culture at all and so he invented this plan for organizing
us."

By the time the first class was graduated (1874), Liter-
ary Society enthusiasm had reached a high peak. Every
student in the Normal School was an active and aggressive
member of one society or the other, and a loyal and warm
supporter of all the interests of the group he had chosen.

When the program for the first commencement was be-
ing prepared, a question arose as to honorary positions on
the program. The personal relationships between students
and teachers had been very close. In scholarship, applica-
tion and earnest endeavor, no one of the graduates had
seemed more outstanding than the others. The Faculty
therefore decided to dispense with the salutatory and vale-
dictory, thus placing all the speakers on an equal basis. To
prevent any show of favoritism they arranged the names of
the speakers alphabetically. Since the Franklin Literary So-
ciety had on its roll graduates whose names began both with
"A" and "Z", that society had both the opening and the
closing orations, to the great embarrassment of the Philo-
matheans. A year later, commencement with its halo of
glory again came. As in the preceding commencement, the
Franklins still possessing this alphabetical advantage again
were able to claim both the salutatory and valedictory ora-
tions. The Philomatheans were now deeply offended.

Because of this situation a bitter quarrel arose between
the literary societies when the fall (1876) term opened.
The "society pay entertainment", the outstanding feature
of each term, was the largest source of revenue each society
possessed. General admission was 25 cents, with reserved
seats at 50 cents. People coming from out of town without
reserved seats frequently paid as much as a dollar for a seat, which in those days was considered a high price for anything.

The Philos had been granted the use of the last Friday night of the term—the best night—for their pay entertainment in compensation for the advantage of the Franklins at the two preceding commencements. To avoid these complications in the future it was agreed by the Faculty and a committee from each society in joint session that starting with the next commencement the societies should each elect honor men for the salutatory and valedictory positions on the program. It was further agreed that from this time forth the evenings for the societies' pay entertainments were to alternate: the Franklins to have Friday night one term and the Philos the next and so on. The Franklins demanded this because they had a large assortment of "A's" and "B's" and "W's", "Y's" and "Z's" on hand and were prepared to hold both opening and closing speeches on the program indefinitely. Now that they were deprived of this advantage they demanded an alternation of Friday nights.

Just at this time, it chanced that according to the new agreement it was the Franklins' turn to have Friday night, but it happened that their secretary had kept no copy of the proceedings of the conjoint committee in which the matter was decided, and the Faculty's copy was lost. The Philos took the position that because their society had not acted on the report of the committee at the time the regulation was made, the resolution was not binding, and insisted on keeping Friday night. Inasmuch as the Philos had already profited at the last commencement by the committee's action and had had an honor man on the program, the Franklins contested the matter bitterly. One of the members of the Philo society, who at that period was one of the proprietors of the Northwestern Ohio Normal School, was then in New York on business.

Mr. Lehr telegraphed him for assistance as the feeling was very tense. His reply shows both the strength of the party feeling that existed, and the extent to which student self-government through the societies operated independent of control by the Faculty.

"St. Nicholas Hotel, N. Y.
October 28, 1876.

'Friend Lehr:

I answered your telegram this morning. According to the constitutions the Philos are entitled to the last evening and you cannot hinder them; I suggested alternations a year ago; but as there was not then time sufficient to amend before closing, the change was not made; but it was there decided and agreed upon that the step to amend would be taken; as it has not been taken we dare not justify deprive the Philos of their right. While I would wish the Franklins strict justice and financial success, I could not advise the Philomatheans to yield their point without first amending the constitutions, for in that event the Franklins would always have the advantage—and in all their history they have never been known to succumb to Philomathean wishes, but have
ever exercised the advantage they possessed. I wrote L... and M... today advising them to amend the constitutions to enforce alternation. Don't you undertake to destroy the individuality of the societies by setting up Faculty decisions of justice higher than their constitutions. We can kindly influence the change. Write me how the affair is settled.

Yours in sympathy,

GEORGE R.

When Mr. Lehr organized two literary societies to encourage competition he was building on a stronger foundation than he knew. He was not favorable to competition between individuals for prizes and the like, as it often engendered personal animosities and deep disappointments, but he believed that team competition was valuable in the formation of character—one learned to be not only a generous winner, but a good loser as well.

From the first there was rivalry between the two societies in every line. Each organization had a library, eventually consisting of several thousand volumes. Each one vied with the other as to the number and choice selection of books. In furnishing the halls of each society there was the sharpest competition.

The zeal of each member for the welfare and growth of his society was so intense that each one took the greatest interest in inducing prospective students to attend the school at Ada. It was not unusual for a student when at home to drive many miles to interview someone known to be interested in securing an education. The enthusiasm of the solicitor was contagious, and he usually won the prospective student for the school—and for his literary society, a Franklin for the Franklins, a Philo for the Philos.

Soliciting for members frequently began before the student reached the village. The Faculty at various times would have liked to have limited this rivalry between the two societies a little, but realized that such interference on their part was out of place under the circumstances and would not have been to the best interests either of the societies themselves or the school.

Much has been said and written regarding the value of these Literary Societies to the students of the school at Ada. In writing to Mr. Lehr more than fifty years later, one whose contacts with the public gave him ample authority to judge the results of the training received through these societies, said:

"I note your pride in the early work of your great institution. This is the first time I have made a state-wide campaign. Not only do I find Ada boys and girls located in every part of the State, but they are leaders in their communities. The wider my observation the more I am impressed with the remarkable influence of the group of men and women taught under your direction. I know no way to term the power exerted by them. It is an abiding wonder to me that one man could organize such mental and moral force as emanated from the school you established. The wonderful training in the Literary Societies which enabled one to think on his feet was one of the finest things a student could have had. That explains why so many men and women from Ada are in public life today." (S. D. F.)
CHAPTER NINE

THE REALIZATION OF THE
CHERISHED IDEAL

1874-1877

"When the courses of study in other colleges were inflexible and rigid; when the absolute democracy of equal chance and equal opportunity was altogether unknown among the other universities of this land; when boys and girls who had to work for a living could not attend the institutions for higher education during four years in succession, as required by the rules and regulations, then as absolutely unchangeable as the laws of the Medes and Persians; when in order to get any credit at all for any work done the student had to enter school at a given time and remain throughout the entire year for four successive years; and when all other college presidents failed to see the outrageous injustice of this iron-clad regime, it was fortunate for the vast numbers of young people, who would otherwise have been compelled to forego the priceless privilege of the higher education, that one great college president understood conditions, and came to the rescue of the worthy multitudes against whom all other college doors were closed. That man was Professor Henry S. Lehr, the father and founder of our university."—PROFESSOR JOHN W. DAVISON, Lima, Ohio.

At this period Normal Schools were beginning to multiply. The academies which had so long acted as feeders to the colleges were quietly closing their doors, their patrons turning to the private Normals where there was a more varied and practical curriculum as well as special training for teachers. A group of teachers had started a Normal School at Republic, Ohio, in an old academy building, and a little later had moved the school to Fostoria, Ohio. The name of this school was the Northwestern Normal School; because of the similarity in the names there was confusion. During the school year of 1874-1875 the Northwestern Normal School of Fostoria, Ohio, merged with the Northwestern Ohio Normal School at Ada, Ohio. This merger brought to the school a number of exceptionally prominent students who later proved a great asset to the institution.

The catalogue for 1876 was larger than any heretofore published. On the list of instructors appeared the name of Frederick Magliott who had recently purchased a fourth
share in the partnership. From this time he was to be known as a member of the "Faculty". There were not many changes in the catalogue, but the price of board was reduced very much to meet competition with other private Normal Schools. Several interesting paragraphs are here given:

"Statement of expenses per week at the Northwestern Ohio Normal School, two students occupying one room:

- Tuition in Common Branches - - .62
- Tuition in Higher Branches - - .77
- Music and Penmanship extra
- Rent of room, furniture, bedding provided and cared for - - .60 to .75
- Good club boarding - - $1.50 to $1.60
- Book rent, four volumes - - .05
- Light and fuel - - .05 to .20
- Total - - $2.75 to $3.37

"A fair estimate of your necessary weekly expense, including tuition, room and book rent, light and fuel, is by self-boarding $2.25 to $2.50; by club boarding, $2.75 to $3.37; by private boarding, $3.65 to $4.25; and we hereby agree to furnish you the foregoing advantages on the terms here specified. If you furnish your own carpet and bedclothes, your expenses will be considerably less than the foregoing estimates. For the winter term tuition is about four cents more per week than above stated. For the short term (the summer school) tuition is $1.00 per week.

"Please compare above estimates with those of other similar institutions. As to the buildings, recitation rooms, so-
ciety halls, furniture, libraries, apparatus, and efficient, live teachers, advantages are equal to, if not greater, than those of any similar institution in the West. Our students are our best advertisements. Ninety-nine per cent of those who once attended here, if they continue in school, return again. Every term has from 15 to 25 per cent increase over any corresponding term.

"If matters are not as represented in our catalogues or circulars, or if, after a fair trial, you should not be satisfied with the work of the school, we shall refund your tuition.

"Reasons Why The Northwestern Ohio Normal School Should Be Patronized:

1. Because religion and morality are her foundation principles.

2. Because it is an institution where any person can pursue any study at any time.

3. Because her motto is economy, practicability and thoroughness.

4. Because her teaching is justly normal.

5. Because she seeks the moral and physical welfare of her students.

6. Because she stands upon her own merits—not being endowed.

7. Because she trains and selects her own teachers.

8. Because her literary societies, the Philomathean and Franklin, are unsurpassed.

9. Because her recitation and study rooms are capacious and pleasant.

10. Because her determination is not to be surpassed by
any other Normal School in Ohio in any of the modern conveniences."

It will be observed that the second of the "Reasons Why The Northwestern Ohio Normal School Should Be Patronized" in the above statement is that any person can pursue any study at any time. The idea that had been a cherished hope in Mr. Lehr’s college days—an institution where a student could enter at any time during the year and find classes to suit his state of advancement—he now had made a reality.

Country school teachers could enter in the fall for advanced work. In the spring after their schools closed, they could return to the Normal and take up their work just where they had left off in the autumn. The farmers’ sons and daughters who had to help at home during planting and harvest time could find from one winter to another just the schedule of classes they desired. In the summer school or "Normal Term" of six weeks there were classes for the most advanced students in all major subjects—for beginners, for any who came.

Such a schedule demanded many teachers or many hours of teaching from each teacher. Mr. Lehr himself taught frequently from 4:00 o’clock in the morning until 9:00 o’clock at night. The other teachers also caught the same spirit of sacrifice and service, though it was rare for any of them to teach earlier than half past six in the morning or later than half past seven at night. Mr. Lehr dared to break away from conventional college methods and advertised not only a flexible curriculum, but also a curricu-

	lum that provided classes in all fundamental subjects each term.

No doubt other educators had considered the advantages of such a plan, but there would be always the consistent objection that such a system would demand a large endowment to meet the expense of so many classes and could not be made practicable. But here at this private, unendowed Normal School, the advertisement was sent out year after year that any student could "enter at any time (term) and find classes to suit". It was also advertised that if things were not as represented, tuition would be refunded.

The lack of financial endowment had its compensations. Each teacher was interested in his students and the students felt themselves in close personal touch with their teachers. Every effort was made to satisfy the students; and the students, if they did not find exactly what they wanted when they came, found something else that pleased them equally well. In very few cases in all the years did a student ask for a refund because of discontent. But if he asked for it, the tuition was refunded. Mr. Lehr made education popular in northwestern Ohio by making it easy for young men and women to go to school; he made them love to go to school by making school a delightful place. There was no aristocracy at Ada save the aristocracy of brains. Every one stood on his own merits.

A student of this period wrote reminiscently many years later:

"It seems to me now that the lessons Dr. Lehr taught me were not so much algebra, Latin, mental philosophy,
or any other particular study which was on the curricu-
ulum; but the deepest lessons which I learned were
work, sympathy, human kindness, and these I got from
his wonderful example. He had built around him an in-
stitution which was composed of the spirit of himself.
To me he was a man of wonderful learning, but above
and beyond that, was his understanding of the human
heart.

"I was perhaps typical of the boys who gathered at
that seat of learning. I had come from a hill farm in es-
tern Ohio and had just enough money obtained by
teaching school to get me started in college. I distinctly
remember that I was bashful, that my trousers were too
short, as were my coat sleeves, because I had outgrown
my clothes; but this made no difference to Professor
Lehr. In fact, if anything it inspired him with greater
interest and helpfulness for he too had felt the pinch of
poverty and had traveled over the same road. In fact I
had a lot of company, because most of the girls and boys
who attended this institution at that time were of the
class who did not have enough money to go to Yale or
Harvard or any such aristocratic school.

"It seems to me now as I look back that had I entered
one of the large and fashionable universities of the East at
this time, my reception would have been entirely differ-
ent. At Ada I was received as though I were an impor-
tant personage. I was solicited to join the literary socie-
ties and became a member of the Philomathean society.
I was encouraged to take part in the performances, and
to such an extent was I encouraged, that at the close of
each term until my graduation at the institution, I was
placed upon the program of closing week, usually in de-
bating, contest, or oration. Certainly that was 'going
some' for a poor and bashful boy and could scarcely
have happened at Dartmouth or Columbia.

"It seemed to me that in those years when I was at
school, Prexy never slept. He was busy all day and all
night, and if there was anything important going on,
either commendable or otherwise, in the student body,
he was sure to be there.

"I had attended school for one term before coming to
Ada and in that school, there were a lot of rules, criti-
cisms, lectures and fault-finding almost every morning at
chapel, but here was a school founded by Dr. Lehr, that
did not have any rules or criticisms. I was simply amaz-
ed, and I remember adopting one resolution for myself,
composed of two words, "Do right". We were all placed
on our honor, and this is what to a very great extent
built up the wonderful college. This spirit attracted stu-
dents from all over the country, and soon the institution
enrolled more students than any other educational insti-
tution in the great state of Ohio." (G. F. G.)

As has been said there were no set rules but every stu-
dent knew that misconduct would bring reproach and if
continued would mean certain expulsion. Each morning at
chapel the teachers were expected to report absences from
classes. No other public mention was made of any irregu-
larity in conduct. Few students who were unwilling to
work remained at the school. The school buildings were never locked night or day. This may have seemed like inviting lawlessness but the very contrary was the result. However, there were, occasionally, some good jokes played on the sagacious little professor. The students of this early period took a special delight in making Mr. Lehr's cow a target for their fun—just why has not been ascertained. It may have been because so many of them "earned their way" by clearing his pasture field of stumps.

A time-honored and oft repeated tale is told of a group of students of the '70's who planned to take Mr. Lehr's cow and put her in Chapel Hall. Fortunately, the professor of astronomy was making observations that night; he saw the cow gather and overheard their whispered conversation. About midnight he awakened Mr. Lehr and told him that some of the boys were going to the pasture field after his cow. Mr. Lehr got up, put on some old clothes of which he had a large assortment, pulled an old slouch hat down over his face, and started forth to see what was going on. He walked along slowly; presently he heard peculiar whistling; he whistled back in reply. Soon one of the "gang", supposing the whistle was a signal from one of the boys, hurried forward and ran straight into Mr. Lehr's out-stretched arms. "Oh!" said he, "Pardon, Professor, I did not know it was you." The culprit thought that some of the guilty crowd or all of them had played a trick on him and that he alone was caught, so he "talked": "McL.... got us into this trouble, he told on us; we'll go for him—but get those two coming here."

Both Mr. Lehr and the "prisoner" whistled; but when the two other boys were close enough to recognize the Professor, they broke and ran—and he after them. They gained on him but he knew where they roamed and quickly followed them. When he reached there one of the fellows was sitting innocently studying. Mr. Lehr said, "Where are B.... and R....?" Without smiling the busy student replied that he guessed they were in bed.

That is where Mr. Lehr found them, panting for breath—and so was he. He inquired of B.... if he were sick. "No," answered B.... Mr. Lehr then said he would like to feel his pulse as he thought there must be something wrong with his heart judging from his rapid breathing. As he raised the covers to take B....'s wrist, he found B.... still had his coat on.

Mr. Lehr said, "You are too warm; throw back the covers." At that B.... and R.... jumped out of bed, boots and all. Then they all had a good laugh, tradition bearing record that Mr. Lehr rolled over on the floor with laughter. Mr. Lehr would not tell the boys who was his informant, and they always blamed poor McL....

A fragment of a poem, describing "Prexy", written by a student of this period is interesting.

_Fer his size, he weren't no wonder_  
_Brains don't come in loads o' hay,  
But for smartness, well say, stranger,  
_Knowing things just came his way._
How he knewed 'em I can't tell you,
There is where the puzzles be,
Knowned 'em past or knowned 'em future,
Just as easy as could be.

(W. I. P.)

An incident regarding rules, that Mr. Lehr delighted to recall, was of three college men from eastern Ohio who entered the Normal early in 1878. They came a few days after the opening of the term and supposed that the President had forgotten to read the rules to them. Seeing Professor Lehr on the street, they stopped him saying they wanted to know the rules, lest they might violate some of them and get into trouble. Mr. Lehr replied, "I presume you all three are gentlemen."

They replied, "We are so reckoned at our homes." He then told them that if they were gentlemen there would be no trouble, as gentlemen were not profane, nor did they lie, nor steal, nor get drunk.

One of them remarked, "That method of government may do here but it would not do elsewhere." In about two weeks they again met the Professor and said, "It works like a charm."

Another incident of these early days is recorded here to show the many-sided character of the founder of this Normal School. There was a large grove about five miles southwest of town; some colored people from the surrounding region were holding a camp-meeting there. Several of the students went out one night to have some fun—and had it. They came home with battered faces and blackened eyes. A few days later this group, augmented by a number of others, went out to "clean up the camp". When Mr. Lehr was told of it he quickly hired a horse and buggy and started for the camp ground. A number of people attempted to dissuade him from going as the feeling was high and trouble was brewing. Some of the townspeople followed him in case that he might need help.

He reached the camp ground in advance of his "protectors". When they arrived, they saw him in the midst of a group of angry and excited students; the colored people, too, were angry and muttering—ready to fight. He talked to "his boys" as a loving father would talk to his sons. Presently all of them to a man—angry as they were—followed him out of the grounds and trouble was averted.

Colored students seldom came to Ada. Nothing was said in the catalogue about their admission or non-admission. If anyone wrote or asked about it, Mr. Lehr replied that he advised all colored students to go to Oberlin, or, later, to Wilberforce. If however a colored student came, he lodged at the Lehr home for a few days or a week; then his way was paid by Mr. Lehr to one of the above named institutions. The colored students were not well received at Ada, through no fault of the President.
CHAPTER TEN

THE NEW BUILDING
1877-1880

"One very beautiful feature that characterizes the school is that implicit confidence may be placed in the printed matter which it circulates. We have found everything as represented in the catalogue and feel no hesitancy in encouraging all who may be about to enter school to give the Normal a trial, for we have been there and know whereof we speak."—Testimonial prepared of their own volition by fifty of the students for the catalogue of 1878-1879.

The enrollment of 1877 had become so large that it was impossible for growth to continue without additional facilities. The Normal building which had been built to accommodate about four hundred students was filled to overflowing. Of this Mr. Lehr said:

"Under ordinary conditions a school, as well as a tree must continue to grow. When growth ceases there is danger of decay. Other Normal Schools, most of them privately owned, were springing up all around in northwestern Ohio and Indiana. Competition was increasing and the lack of room formed a 'tight-jacket' that admitted of no expansion."

Mr. Lehr talked with many of the citizens of the town and surrounding country in regard to the need of another building. Some said it would be a good thing; others said when they needed houses or barns they built them, and if the Faculty needed room, it should erect a building. But the Faculty was not able to do so. Mr. Lehr owned his home, but it was covered with a mortgage. His associates were little better off. Year by year what small surplus had accrued above a very ordinary allowance for salary was regularly invested in apparatus and equipment. Mr. Lehr knew there must be another building very soon and suggested taxation of the village or of the whole township; but the township was immovable, and the village manifested little interest. Most of the citizens thought the school was now as large as it would ever be, and all but a few, perhaps two or three, smiled when he said his ideal was to have a school with four or five thousand students.

Mr. Lehr deplored the fact that the campus consisted of only two and one-half acres. Just about this time—1877 or '78—it would have been possible to buy five acres adjoining the south end of the campus for $500. Mr. Lehr wanted to buy the land but his associates thought it would not be needed; no one else was interested, so, as he had no
money and owned but a sixth interest, he let the matter drop; in later years he regretted it exceedingly.

Several neighboring towns—and some farther away—looking with interest upon the growing institution, for some time had been approaching the Faculty in regard to moving the school; some of them were offering substantial inducements—a fine, large campus of many acres, good buildings, and ample equipment. It was a temptation to the sorely tried little professor who was struggling along in poverty. Because of the scarcity of money his wife made his shirts and trousers, and knit his socks. Everything he earned above the barest necessities went back into his beloved school—the child of his brain and heart. Finally the citizens of Ada, hearing of the generous offers made repeatedly and insistently by other towns, called a public meeting to discuss some plan of securing the money by taxation.

Mr. Lehr had studied the situation from every angle and knew just what could be done. If a tax were levied, the money could be secured. Naturally such a tax would be levied by the Board of Education, but legally the Board had no power to do it unless a new law should be passed in the Legislature giving the citizens of the district permission to vote as to whether the Board of Education should have the privilege of levying such a tax. He believed he could secure the necessary legislation. With this idea in mind the Faculty presented a proposition to the citizens.

They proposed that the school district should purchase from them a portion of the Normal campus at a cost of $2,000, and erect thereon a school building to cost not less than $16,000, and equip the same with necessary apparatus and furnishings at an investment of not less than $25,000, and to expend $500 on the improvement of the grounds. In consideration whereof all pupils of the Union School District who would pass a reasonable examination in the common branches were to be admitted free of charge as students in the Literary Department of the Normal (excepting the common branches) until of legal age. This contract was to remain in effect for thirty years, at the end of which time the building and grounds were to revert to the school district. Besides this, the Faculty, as a guarantee that they would fulfill their part of the contract, were to give a mortgage of $4,000 on the portion of the campus not used by the town for the new building.\footnote{The contract as finally agreed upon differed materially from this proposition. See Appendix A.}

When the vote was taken to ascertain how many were in favor of taxing the district to raise the money, there was but one negative vote. The next move was to get the law passed to permit such a levy. The meeting of the citizens, when the taxation was agreed upon, took place on the 16th of April. It would be necessary to move quickly if the law were to be passed during the current session of the legislature. Mr. Lehr's avowed political opponent was still belligerent; he had not attended the called meeting of the citizens, but he knew that Mr. Lehr hoped to raise the money by taxation and had made his boasts that he would defeat Mr. Lehr's plan in the legislature, which was strongly Democratic.
Within less than an hour after the town meeting was over, Mr. Lehr in company with three men, two of them Democrats, started for Columbus. They wanted to reach there in advance of Mr. Lehr's political opponent. Succeeding in this, one of the Democrats who was in the party went at once to see a senator with whom he had influence and secured the promise of his cooperation to see the bill through. In a short time the enabling act or law was passed and the Board of Education levied the tax to raise the money for the new building.

It might be interesting to know how it happened that Mr. Lehr had such firm friends among the Democrats when he himself was an ardent Republican. An excerpt from his "Reminiscences" will explain this:

"I shall here describe some secret history. At the time the school campus was deeded by the citizens of Ada to the Faculty in 1876 the auditor of the county was my personal friend. When the deed was recorded he said he would not transfer it to our names as he considered it to be school property, and as such should be non-taxable. I thought so too. For two years we paid tax on some of our personal school property.

"When I was a member of the Board of County Examiners, I had to drive to Kenton frequently to conduct the examinations. As the roads were so poor, I found it necessary to drive a team of two horses. An out-of-town examiner was, therefore, expensive as his traveling expenses had to be paid. The last examination for a certain quarter was held the Saturday before Christmas. It was a very cold day, several degrees below zero; but I needed my check, as my livery bill for the quarter was still unpaid, and I also wanted to pay my taxes. The president of the Board of Examiners did not come that day.

"The clerk made out the statement for my pay and expenses and signed it, but it had to be signed also by the president of the Board. I went to the county auditor who was a Republican, but not a personal friend, and asked him if he would accept the statement and give me a check for the amount; he could get the endorsement of the president of the Board later. He refused to do so. He said there was no sense in appointing an examiner from out of town when there were men near at hand fully as competent to perform the duty. He proposed to see to it that there would be a change, and he further said that as we were not paying taxes on our school property he was going to see to it that we would pay taxes in the future.

"I went to the office of the treasurer who was a Democrat. I had not voted for him, but I had the temerity to present my case to him. He said, 'I cannot cash your order without the signature of the president, but I will give you my personal check on the bank for the amount and when the president of the Board comes to town I will get him to sign your order.'

"On my way home from the county seat I fully resolved that that Republican auditor would not get my vote for a second term. He was renominated. During the campaign the Democratic candidate came to me and asked me to vote for him. I said to him, 'Henry, if I
work for you and you are elected, will you keep the Normal School property off the tax duplicate?

"He replied, 'I can not promise that, Lehr; but trust me, you will find me all right.' I trusted him and about a week before the election I quietly put on my fighting gloves. I went to some of my army friends, told them the story of the school tax and of our financial struggle to build up the school. I appealed to their professed friendship and to favors I had bestowed on some of them while in the army. I got about five or six votes there. I worked among the students and friends of the school in other parts of the county. I secured forty-three votes for the Democratic candidate; he was elected and became my warm friend.

"The Normal School property remained on the free list during his term of office. Some may question whether this was right. I believed that we were doing much for the town, the township, the county, and the state, for we had founded a school where the 'common people' could obtain an education in almost every line at a minimum cost. Most of the colleges and universities of Ohio being church schools paid no taxes; their tuition was expensive, and they failed to teach many courses of study needed by the world. They had no teachers' training classes, no courses in bookkeeping, stenography, or engineering, and but little if any music, and no fine art. We were furnishing all these courses at the lowest possible cost. I am willing to leave the case to our old students and to the citizens of the county."

The matter of taxation being such a serious one, Mr. Lehr felt that before the erection of the new building it must be settled in one way or another. The Faculty refused to close the contract for the building without a guarantee of some kind in regard to future taxation. Mr. Lehr said:

"I had studied out the plan of taxing the district to get the new building, for which I give myself as much credit as for any act or work that I did in building up the Normal. Now a new problem had to be solved and solved quickly. I proposed that fifty or more citizens should sign such a guarantee as would free the Faculty in future of that burden. We engaged a competent attorney to draw up a paper that would be binding in law. I shall here insert a copy of it:

'We, the undersigned citizens of Hardin County, Ohio, in consideration that the Faculty of the Northwestern Ohio Normal School located at Ada, Ohio, having this day signed and contracted with the directors of the Ada Union School District, located in said County of Hardin and State of Ohio, to continue the said Northwestern Ohio Normal School for the term of thirty years from this date at Ada, Ohio, under and by virtue of the said contract hereinafter referred to, do for ourselves, our heirs, or assigns hereby mutually agree to pay or cause to be paid, all taxes, state, county or municipal (except sidewalk) that may be legally levied upon what is now known as the Northwestern Ohio Normal School Building and grounds located in Ada, Ohio, for a period of thirty years from this date, providing the said
Faculty of the Northwestern Ohio Normal School, their heirs, assigns or successors, shall continue said school for said period of thirty years at Ada, Ohio. Should said Normal School be abandoned or cease to be taught as per agreement with the said School Board before the expiration of the said contract herein referred to by said Faculty, their heirs, assigns, or successors, then this obligation shall be void, otherwise to remain in full force and virtue in law and be a lien upon our estate, both real and personal.'

Fifty of the citizens signed this remarkable document, and the matter of taxation appeared closed for the time. The contract was given for the building; it was to be ready for occupancy the first day of August, 1879.

Again as in the erection of the first building, the contractor left town before the building was completed and never returned; his bondsmen had to complete the work. A number of the laborers that had been employed wanted their pay. The bondsmen were unable to judge whether their claims were just and refused to pay them. The workmen threatened to set fire to the building, and lest some injury might result, it was suggested that Mr. Lehr pay the claims with the understanding that he would be reimbursed later. He personally paid the bills; the reimbursement was forgotten.

The prospect of enlarged accommodations promising permanency to the institution resulted in a larger enrollment. During the erection of the building there was an increase in attendance of forty-seven per cent. Up to this time Mr. Lehr had owned only a sixth share in the partnership of the Northwestern Ohio Normal School. He was now able to purchase a larger share and became owner of a fourth interest.

In the catalogue of 1878-'79 there was a rearrangement of terms. It was not considered a very good arrangement for it left four weeks without school in the summer. Many students had come from a distance and were financially unable to return to their homes. Heretofore there had been two weeks' vacation at the close of the fall, winter, and summer terms. This had left only two weeks in summer without school. The new arrangement granted a vacation of one week between the fall and winter term, and four weeks in summer.

The change was an attempt to accommodate the calendar of the country school teachers. The districts were offering a longer term of school; this changed the dates when the teachers were free to enter. From the catalogue of that year the following is taken:

"Students who may want to teach a term may do so, and yet get the benefit of three terms a year—about as much time as is usually given in colleges for an entire year.

"The Normal term (summer school) will make a specialty of training teachers. The services of the best lecturers and teachers in the country will be obtained to assist the present able and efficient faculty. No pains or expense will be spared to make it both pleasant and profitable. A teachers' institute will be formed and the
most vital points in school government, school organization, school law, methods, and so forth will be fully considered. Papers will be prepared and read by the students and afterwards discussed."

The fall term was to begin August 13, but the building was not nearly completed. On Saturday evening, August 10, Mr. Lehr called on the president of the Board of Education and asked for the key. That excellent gentleman replied that he could not hand over the keys until he had received from the Faculty the mortgage of $4,000 to which they had bound themselves. Mr. Lehr replied by asking him whether the house was completed and whether the Board had the $500 in cash to pay for the grading of the campus and the $1,500 they had agreed to give for apparatus. The president of the Board hesitated a little and then said, "We have done our best, Lehr, and I'll trust you fellows that you will do the fair thing for the district." He then handed over the keys.

On the first day of the fall term, August 13, 1879, chapel exercises were held in the new building. As the house was not nearly completed, there were no formal dedicatory exercises, but, in the language of the founder, "It was dedicated to the service of the Lord in spirit." Professor Lehr read the whole of the sixth chapter of Second Chronicles, and the pastor of the Methodist church made the dedicatory prayer.

They were scarcely settled in the new building when there was trouble again about the taxes. Some people said the Faculty were making too much money and demanded that they pay taxes on the new building, and that they be compelled to pay taxes on the first building for the eight years preceding. Mr. Lehr presented a statement to the county auditor. He, in turn, forwarded the statement to the state auditor. The document stated among other items that the school was used for the free education of the public school youth as well as for such students as might wish to enter by paying tuition; that, as there were no state Normals, the main object of the school was the training of teachers for their profession; that one-third of the new building was used for public literary societies; and that the property was now on the free list. The auditor of the state replied as follows:

"Respectfully submitted to the auditor of Hardin County with the remark that while it is not perfectly clear, as to the 'view of profit', I think it is no stretch of the law to regard this Normal School as an 'Institution of Learning' and that its property necessary to 'run' it, might be exempt from taxes. I would recommend therefore that it be retained on the exempt list at least for the small remainder of the 'decennial' period."

There was little question regarding taxes thereafter, and the property remained on the free list.

In the catalogue of 1879-'80 under "Remarks on the Several Courses of Study in the Literary Department" appeared these statements:

\[2 \text{ Later one-third of both buildings was used for public Literary Societies.}\]
1. From four to six classes in arithmetic are formed each term; from three to five in English grammar and analysis; from two to three in geography; four and some terms six in algebra; two in rhetoric; two in geometry; and at least one class each term in United States history, natural philosophy, physiology, bookkeeping, penmanship, vocal music, drawing, logic, Latin, Greek and German grammar, and frequently two in each; also one in Caesar, Cicero, and Virgil.

2. Special drills are given each term in elocution, orthography, letter writing, debating and parliamentary law, without extra charge.

3. Whenever a sufficient number of persons desire to enter a class in any subject not regularly advertised for that term, their wishes will be recognized.”

Announcements such as these attracted the attention of scores of young men and women who were preparing to teach. In those days “teaching country school” was a stepping stone to future achievement.

In the catalogue of 1880-'81 another adjustment in the calendar was made. Five terms were announced, each following in succession without vacation. There were then three terms of ten weeks each, one of eleven, and the summer term of six weeks. There still remained four weeks in summer without school.

By 1881 there were so many students remaining over during the few weeks of vacation that there arose a demand for instruction during that period. The catalogue announced a “vacation term”. This became a permanent feature.

Usually the enrollment was from 65 to 125. The regular teachers went on vacation and high school principals or public school superintendents taught those few weeks and received the tuition that was paid in. Mr. Lehr seldom left the town during the vacation term, as the correspondence was always very heavy at that time of year; and it was then too that catalogues and circulars by the thousands were mailed to “names” purchased from the leading farm journals of Ohio.
CHAPTER ELEVEN

A PERIOD OF RAPID GROWTH
1880-1885

"Representative Frank B. Willis sprung a startling statement the other day in a cloak-room conversation on the high cost of living. Willis asserted—and did so with such an air of truthfulness that many were inclined to believe him—that there is a good boarding-house in his town of Ada, Ohio, where one can get twenty-one meals for $1.75 a week or 25 cents a day. They are good meals, too, Willis insists. He says that he himself boards there whenever he goes home for a few days, and that he invariably leaves the table satisfied. That last statement was a clincher, for Willis is a large person. If they can feed Willis three meals for a quarter, satisfy his appetite, and make a reasonable profit from the transaction, there is something wrong somewhere. If the Congressman in Ada, Ohio, can be boarded for $1.75 a week, a man in Washington who pays ten cents for a piece of rhubarb pie ought to at least get a full quarter section."—Philadelphia Public Ledger, 1912.

Up to 1880 board had cost from $2.50 to $3.75 a week, except in the clubs, where board could be secured at about $1.50 a week. Now, however, it became necessary because of competition to advertise cheaper board and room rent. Other Normals—Lebanon in Ohio and Danville and Valparaiso in Indiana—were advertising board at $1.25 a week and room rent at from 35 to 50 cents a week. Those schools owned their own boarding halls and controlled the prices. The Faculty sometimes considered building a boarding hall of its own, but Mr. Lehr felt indebted to the town for helping him to erect the buildings and considered it to be fair to let the townpeople board the students in private boarding houses and make what profit there was to be made—and there was a profit at that time even at the regular price of $1.75 a week. Many women came to this little town for the sole purpose of boarding students and with the money made keeping boarders gradually acquired comfortable homes and also educated their sons and daughters.

In the catalogue of 1880-'81 there appeared for the first time an advertisement of board, room rent, and tuition for $105 for forty-seven weeks. This was known as the "year plan". For ten weeks the same could be secured for $26. This was known as the "term plan". In 1885 the school year was changed to include forty-nine weeks, and the charge for the year was then $118. For ten weeks the price advanced to $28. Many a student came to school for a year and spent very little above the price paid in at the school office.

The Faculty now agreed with certain boarding houses to
pay them in advance the board and room rent for a year or a term as the case might be, of students who chose to pay in advance to secure a reduction in price. The price paid the landlady by the Faculty was less than the individual student could negotiate, but the landladies were usually glad to take one or two "year students" to get a lump sum of money. The Faculty was a loser by this plan as part of the regular tuition fee was applied on the board bill; but it was confronted with the alternative either of building a boarding hall of its own to bring down the price of board or of paying from its own pocket the difference between the regular price of board asked by the landlady and the price necessarily advertised in the catalogue to meet competition.

There were no set rules as to what should be served at meals. Each landlady served what she liked; but each one of the seventy or eighty landladies knew about what the other one was going to serve. There was keen competition between them. Each house wanted to have the honor of being considered the best. For breakfast ordinarily there were fried potatoes with thinly cut fried beefsteak or bacon, bread, butter, coffee, sugar, milk, and a small dish of oatmeal set beside each plate. For dinner, roast meat, mashed potatoes, and at least one vegetable dish, with bread and butter furnished the main part of the meal; for dessert there was pie or pudding. The supper consisted of salad or cold meat, fruit, cake or cookies, bread and butter and sometimes potatoes. Often on Sunday there was chicken for dinner, and on Thanksgiving Day, as few of the students went home, a turkey dinner was served.

The following conversation is a sample of one that took place so often that we give this one as it actually occurred. Three fine fellows from eastern Ohio came into the office one term and said, "Do you pretend to say you can give us comfortable rooms and living board forty-nine weeks for $118?"

The reply was, "Yes, we will show you the rooms and if the board is not better than you expect it to be, after trying it one week you need not pay a cent."

Their spokesman replied, "But what assurance have we that we can get back our money?"

The reply was, "You need not pay until the end of the first week, then if things are satisfactory you will be expected to pay the $118."

They were then shown to the rooms and liked them. Returning to the office, their leader said, "You talk and act like an honest man; we will pay today." These young men remained to complete the four year course and were the means of influencing a number of others to come. The institution never had better friends. In this case, as well as in thousands of others, Mr. Lehr's oft repeated statement, "Our students are our best advertisements," proved to be true.

In every possible way Mr. Lehr endeavored to keep prices at a minimum. He raised quantities of vegetables and sold them at a very low price to the townspeople. He bought a tract of timber-land and sold wood to the students for fuel. A "double cord" of hard wood, sawed and cut, sold at $2.75; a single cord cost $1.75. He paid 80
cents a cord to have it cut, and paid a man to haul it in from three to four miles to town over the muddy roads; often he lost money on his wood but he kept the price of fuel within the reach of his students.

Nearly all of the students burned wood in those days. In each room there was a little box-stove which each student had to fire on cold mornings. The wood would be piled up outside in the rear of the lot, and many a time in winter the snowdrifts would completely cover it. But the making of a fire was not considered a hardship in those days; almost all had had such experience in their own homes since there were few furnaces and central heating plants in those days.

A portion of a letter to Mr. Lehr which gives an insight into these days is here given:

"I well recall hearing a glowing account of you and your school from a neighboring country boy several years my senior. One rainy, muddy Sabbath I drove to his home and secured a catalogue of your institution and a short time later entered at Ada for the fall term of 1881. The great crowd at the depot surprised me; hundreds of trunks were piled up on the platform and scores of them were thrown out of the baggage-car of the train on which I arrived. I stood on the car-step a moment looking over the crowd and saw you coming down, speaking to everybody, and hurriedly giving directions here and there. I was introduced to you by a student of my acquaintance and I trust you will believe me entirely when I say that from the moment I grasped your hand until the present day my admiration for you and your work has increased.

"The first term I was there you taught a class in civil government at five in the morning. All the other teachers had their full quota of classes, so you taught the class at that hour, although your own schedule was full, to accommodate those who could recite at no other hour. Your lectures, talks, and explanations opened up a wide horizon to me, and I fully appreciate why in later years your judgment has been regarded unerring on nearly all public questions of political and governmental nature. At that time you also had a magnificent corps of teachers around you, and they certainly were instructors in the true sense of that word. They were your loyal lieutenants, and many of them had trained under you.

"The incidents of those intervening terms until the summer of 1884 were many and varied, but everyone of them is a pleasant recollection. You were the center around which all gravitated. If it was a college prank, like tearing up your sidewalk on Hallowe’en—and I remember you coming out of the front door like an avenging angel after the devil—or whether it was hanging the museum skeleton on a telephone wire, we had you first in mind. But more laudable to us is the impression you made in every classroom and the industry you instilled into every student that was not a hopeless case—and few of these remained long at Ada.” (J. W. H.)

The enrollment for the year 1880-81 was 1402, and for 1881-82 was 1918, an increase of 516 in one year. Every
room in the new building was occupied by classes. Mr. Lehr knew that within a few years he would need another building, and hoped that some person of wealth, attracted by the large attendance and the genuine service which the school was rendering, would provide funds to erect additional buildings. He was so certain of getting another large building soon that even in the erection of the second he had planned for a third. He designed the second building in such a way that part of it could readily be converted into a museum where some of the antiques and scientific specimens which he had been collecting could be shown to advantage.

With the idea of a third large building in mind he now suggested organizing a new literary society, as only a small portion of the student body, comparatively speaking, could now secure training in the two societies already organized, although the sessions convened at half past seven and continued until almost midnight. His idea was that the new society could meet at first in the old hall on the third floor of the first building; then as soon as the next building would be erected he would organize another new society as a competing mate to this one. Thus there would be two pairs of competing societies.

His idea of organizing a new society aroused warm discussion and opposition. The Faculty, teachers, and the students all debated the question. It was suggested, instead of this plan, that junior societies be formed to act as feeders to the old societies but there was some objection to this plan too. Some of the students who took great interest in the affairs of the school warned Mr. Lehr that the introduction of a third literary society would destroy the competition which had been such a valuable asset to the institution. But Mr. Lehr carried his point and formed the new society. It was to meet on Saturday nights in the old hall.

A group of new students who were not members of the other societies formed the nucleus of this new literary society. They chose the name Adelphian, and selected as their motto Ad Astra per Aspera—"To the Stars through Difficulties." As it happened their motto was well chosen, for the struggles were many and great. They named their humorous paper, The Adelphian Sunbeam, and bravely that Sunbeam gleamed, though the clouds sometimes hung low.

The old students were in favor of the old societies and usually would see to it that a new student from their neighborhood was signed up for one of the old societies even before he left home; many a new student come to the Northwestern Ohio Normal School because of the urging of someone who was "electioneering" for his society as much as for the school. The Adelphians, of course, had no old members to boost for them, but they worked hard and won many members. Unfortunately their hall, reached by a steep, winding stairway, was not well situated; and besides, the majority of the students were accustomed to attending literary societies on Friday night and wanted Saturday nights for study.

At first Mr. Lehr, by his own choice, was doorkeeper and marshall of the new society. He would open the door
at any time to admit any who came, but no one could leave until the society was dismissed. In this way he held the audience which tended to be small, in order to encourage the speakers. Some of the members of the new society were not satisfied however, and felt that with conditions as they were, they did not have an even chance with the members of the old societies and consequently withdrew. But there were others who were glad for the added opportunity for platform work and who stood loyally by their society in its early struggles. It was years before the Adelphians got a better hall, and by that time many changes had taken place.

It was in the autumn of 1881, too, that the Young Men’s and Young Women’s Christian Associations established organizations here. There was no room that could be spared for “headquarters” for either one; the work was to be purely devotional. It was not expected that the associations would direct the social life of the institution, as the literary societies with their various activities had thus far controlled all social gatherings.

The Associations conducted prayer-meetings on Tuesday nights for the women and men separately in certain classrooms. Mr. Lehr was unwilling to give up the Saturday evening prayer-meeting for both men and women that he had organized so long before, so that meeting was merged into the Association work. Hundreds attended that prayer-meeting and also the Sunday afternoon meeting of the Associations, which was usually addressed by one of the professors or pastors of the town.

In those days, before automobiles had come into being to produce quick transportation, the students did not go home over week-ends. No one thought of such a thing; the majority of students stayed over even between terms. As there was no vacation at Thanksgiving, except the one day, the students for the most part did not go home even then. On Thanksgiving morning hundreds of young men and women would turn out for the sunrise prayer service at Chapel Hall. Many were the letters received in later years, speaking of treasured memories of those Thanksgiving services.

The students of the ‘80’s and ‘90’s were, for the most part, religiously inclined. The modernistic tendencies that came with the “higher criticism” of the Twentieth Century had not yet cast clouds of doubt and unbelief over the student body of the colleges. The members of the Faculty believed the Bible to be the inspired Word of God. Their influence over the young men and women who sat under their teaching was very strong. A number of the professors taught large student classes in the Sunday Schools of the village. These classes were popular with the students, notably Professor Park’s Sunday School class, which had an average attendance of three hundred, and often more. In the catalogue of 1879-80, and in each one thereafter, appeared these words:

“The institution is free from all sectarian bias, but it is the constant aim of the teachers to recognize God, not only as revealed in His Word, but also in His works—to point out to the student, whenever opportunity affords, the wisdom and goodness of God as exhibited in
nature, to inculcate lessons in morality, both by precept and example."

By 1882 the enrollment of the institution had so increased that it had become a problem to provide recitation rooms for the classes. Mr. Lehr lay awake in the long hours of the night planning and scheming for some method by which he could secure a new building. He knew that he could not expect further help from the Union School District nor could he hope to raise much by subscription from the citizens. He visited various wealthy men but this reply invariably was given, "You have a private school; money donated for such an enterprise is merely given to individuals." He made an effort to interest the township in the erection of a building for the benefit of the students of the township on the same conditions as those enjoyed by the youth of the village of Ada and the Union School District surrounding, but it was to no avail. He finally devised a plan.

Two able teachers, one from a college in northeastern Ohio and one from the teaching force at Ada, were to become proprietors, each one subscribing $4,000. Two other young men were each to subscribe $2,000, thus bringing the stock up to $12,000. The Faculty as a body were to invest $8,000, and a number of citizens agreed to raise $5,000, in all, $25,000. A lawyer had drawn up contracts between the Faculty and the new proprietors, and between the newly formed company and the citizen subscribers. All persons concerned, excepting one, who at the time was engaged in business in Mexico, were assembled at the village

bank to close the contracts, when a telegram announcing the sudden death of the absent member cut short their deliberations. In deference to his wife the proceedings were halted; they were never resumed. Subsequent developments made it clear that this plan would not have been a wise one and that it was just as well that it did not go through.

Thus the large building which was so greatly needed was not built; but as it was imperative to have more room at once, the Faculty built a four-room frame building on the southwest corner of the campus. From the first it was familiarly known as the "Sheep Shed", but in spite of its inartistic appearance, for some years it comfortably housed the classes in ancient and modern languages and in engineering; in more recent years, the Kappa Psi fraternity.

As the personnel of the student body increased in numbers the business management of the school came to occupy much of Mr. Lehr's time. As the years passed, he accordingly handed over, one by one, the teaching of the large classes in elementary subjects to other instructors, many of whom he had trained himself. He was loath to do this as it took from him the personal contact with the students, which he had prized so highly.

In 1882 he handed over the large class in teacher training, which heretofore he himself had taught, to Professor Warren Darst, who had recently purchased a share in the proprietorship. Professor Darst had had training under Alfred Holbrook, whom Mr. Lehr considered a prince among
teachers. Mr. Lehr now confined himself to several smaller classes in advanced subjects.

In the catalogue of 1884 a slight and permanent change in the calendar of terms was made. In the first catalogue (1871) a Normal or summer term was announced to be conducted from June 18 to July 27, 1872, for review and also for advanced subjects. This term had not been largely attended in the early years as the teachers found it more convenient to prepare for their work during the fall term from August 12 to November 15. However, Mr. Lehr persisted in conducting his summer school each year. Gradually the attendance grew as the length of the school term in the district and town schools increased, so that teachers were no longer able to attend school except during the summer. It soon became one of the most popular and best attended terms of the year. The catalogue this year announced a summer school of nine weeks.

There were now four terms of ten weeks each and the summer term of nine weeks. Mr. Lehr wanted the summer term also to be of ten weeks duration but his associates objected as they desired a longer vacation. He says:

"We learned by experience that students and teachers could work throughout the entire year as well as farmers, carpenters, merchants, bankers and other business men. We found that it was not necessary to have a vacation from the middle of June until the middle of September. No business firm would allow its plant to stand idle for months during the summer. Why should a school building be closed and its teachers without employment?"
CHAPTER TWELVE

OHIO NORMAL UNIVERSITY

"Thorough, Practical, Economical"

1885

"Fifty years ago the Ohio Normal University drew an unusually energetic and self-reliant body of students—such workers as I've never met on any other campus." — CLARA L. MYERS, Ph. B., Litt. D., Professor Emeritus of Flora Stone Mather College, Western Reserve University, speaking at the fiftieth anniversary of the class of 1887.

In 1871 the only regular course presented was the four-year "Normal" course in the Literary Department, now known as the course in Liberal Arts. As new needs arose or were recognized, new courses or departments\(^1\) were added.

\(^1\) At this time the word "department" was used at this school where the word "college" is employed today, e. g., what would then be referred to as the Department of Law is called the College of Law today.

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From the beginning there had been excellent instruction in music, the first teacher being one of no less distinction than Theodore Presser, who later rose to unusual prominence in the field of music. His successors at Ada maintained the high standard in the Music Department which he had set. Instruction was given in piano, organ, voice culture, chorus conducting, orchestral instruments and in the Theory of Music.

Within a year after the erection of the first building, a commercial course was added to the curriculum. This department proved very popular with the students, and developed rapidly. Courses were presented in both theoretical and practical bookkeeping. From an old catalogue we clip the following:

"In the Business Hall actual practice and experience are given in Banking, Railroading, Insurance, Merchandising, Real Estate and Loans, Commissions, Shipping, Importing, Jobbing, etc."

In the late '80's and the '90's three teachers were required to give their full time to the commercial subjects. The classes in Business English were taught by the teachers of the Liberal Arts Department.

The Department of Stenography, which arose in 1880, was not an integral part of the Commercial Department, nor, for that matter, of the institution at all. For a number of years it was conducted by several instructors who received the entire amount of all tuition paid for courses in that department. In turn, they paid a small stipend to the Faculty for the use of a room and for advertising and good-will. The graduates were well-trained and had no difficulty in securing positions.

The School of Telegraphy was not large, but it provided a needed course of instruction in that day, in view of the expansion that was still going on in the railroads.

The catalogue of 1874 announced a course in civil engineering with "field work". In the early years most of the men who completed the four year course in the Department of Liberal Arts and many who took only part of the course, took classes in surveying and engineering. Thus the department was always well patronized by the students, but not until in the '90's did it attain full development and become a strong, well-defined College.

Courses of instruction in the Fine Arts were added in 1879. This department, while it never developed into a major part of the school's curriculum, proved an important addition to the courses already being offered in Liberal Arts.

In 1884, a group of students who wanted to study medicine persuaded the Faculty to open a Medical Department; the catalogue of that year contained an announcement of it. Some students came for the course but not enough to justify its continuance. Under these conditions, it was impracticable to continue that department and it was discontinued after two or three years.

In response to requests from a number of students who wished to study law, the Department of Law was opened
in 1885. This course was popular from the first and gave early promise of the splendid development it afterwards attained. Excellent instruction was combined with the opportunities provided by the literary societies for public speaking and debate before large audiences and for frequent parliamentary drill.

The Department of Pharmacy was established in 1886 in anticipation of legislation which would require all pharmacists to be examined by a State Board. At first there were not many students in the department, but it was not long before the proposed law was passed, after which the Pharmacy Department grew rapidly. To provide space for laboratories and recitation rooms, the Commercial Department, which was now in need of larger quarters, was moved to a large hall downtown, and the space vacated was occupied by the Department of Pharmacy. The continued expansion of this department eventually led to the construction in 1894 of a new building for its sole use.

The development of the Military Department, which for many years constituted an important part of the physical activities of the school, came about in a natural way. In the fall of 1883 the citizens of Ohio were to vote on the adoption of two amendments to the constitution of the state. The second of these two amendments provided for the prohibition of the sale and manufacture of intoxicating liquors in the state. The state prohibition workers asked that the children of the state be trained to sing patriotic songs, and to march through the towns, carrying flags and mottoes with appropriate words. Temperance workers aid-
ed by the music teachers of the Normal collected a number of boys and girls of Ada and drilled them on the campus.

Mr. Lehr had always been an indefatigable worker in the cause of temperance. He felt that the ten saloons in the village were a menace to the students who were under his charge. He accordingly offered his services as captain in this temperance drive and formed the children of the town in a company to march in the parade. The students watched this with much interest. In a short time thereafter they asked him to establish military drill in the school. There were enough students interested to form two companies. The whole subject aroused much enthusiasm. The following year Mr. Lehr obtained from the state a supply of rifles for these two companies.

The member of Congress from this district informed Mr. Lehr that the state of Ohio was entitled to two United States army officers as commandants at institutions of learning and that but one was in service at the time—at the State University. He suggested that Mr. Lehr apply for the detail of an officer. As soon as it was announced in the daily papers that Ada had applied for the detail of an army officer for its “Military Department”, six other educational institutions in Ohio also entered applications. The Secretary of War, Robert Lincoln, arranged to send an inspector to all of the schools applying, to consider how to dispose of their applications.

The report of the Inspector was very complimentary to the Military Department at Ada. In spite of the fact that between the two companies, each of which had one hun-
dred cadets, there were only one hundred and ten rifles, the report said that the students were older and presented a better appearance than those of the other schools that had been inspected. The situation was finally settled by Major McKinley presenting a bill in the House of Representatives by which the number of officers to be appointed for educational institutions in Ohio was increased to three. Thus an army officer was appointed to the school at Ada to be in charge of the Military Department.

The officer who was appointed, unfortunately did not easily adjust himself to the conditions at Ada. One small point that came up indicates the type of problem that was created. The cadets under Mr. Lehr had been wearing shoulder straps to indicate their rank; the new officer would allow no cadets to wear shoulder straps, and put all the men into one company. Interest in the department decreased rapidly, so much so that two years later the United States government wanted to withdraw its military equipment and send it to another institution. Mr. Lehr, however, did not intend to give up the department which he had worked so hard for without a fight to hold it, and declared he would go to Washington to see the President. The commandant and some of the teachers and townspeople said, "Lehr will find out when he gets to Washington that he is not in Ohio. What can he do there since the administration is Democratic?" Mr. Lehr realized that too, but still intended to try. Through the aid of friends in the Democratic party he secured an audience with President Cleveland, and the department was retained at Ada.

About six years later, an attempt was again made to remove the Military Department to another institution. Again Mr. Lehr took the matter up with the authorities, and as a result an act was passed in Congress providing for the detail of seventy-five officers as military instructors in the various colleges of the country as against forty which had previously been provided. Thus this matter was settled and no further attempt was made to remove the department.

In every catalogue directly under the heading of the Military Department appeared this pertinent paragraph:

"The drills, exercises and studies of the department are so placed as not to interfere with regular academic duties, and it is recommended that all who can possibly do so, avail themselves of the advantages to be gained by military instruction. Nations are but individuals or families on a large scale and are as subject to differences and contentions. The clash of arms will come again as surely as time goes on, and the young men who are diligent in gaining military knowledge at our colleges and universities are the ones who will promptly organize, drill, and officer the citizen soldiery, the main dependence of our country."

For the purpose of encouraging competition between the companies, the commandant arranged a flag contest on a competitive basis to determine which company was to carry the colors. There was also an annual inspection in the spring of each year by a military officer from the United States army. It was arranged that this inspection should take place the day before the contest. For the inspection uni-
forms were freshly cleaned and pressed, brass buttons shined and epaulets and swords very much in evidence. As a result of the inspection reports to the War Department were invariably favorable to the Military Department.

Then on Contest Day the United States army officers who were present judged the contest between the companies and awarded the flag to the winning company. Crowds came from far and near to view these contests. The day would be ushered in by a sunrise salute fired by the artillery department from the two old cannon on the campus. President Lehr, acting as Field Marshall, wore his silk hat on Contest Day and carried his gold-headed cane. Each of the five captains would drill his company before an admiring and sympathetic crowd of onlookers. The decision of the judges rendered, the day would be closed with a dress parade and an artillery salute.

The day after the contest, the battalion would march in a body to the home of President Lehr and would stand at attention, while he would address them, and thank them for their hard work in preparation for the contest and inspection, and for their excellent spirit. There would be great applause and three cheers for the commandant, three cheers for President Lehr, and then the band would play. According to time honored custom, each of the cadets would receive a bag of peanuts from the hand of President Lehr. There would be more cheers and then the commands: “Present arms!” “Carry arms!” “Fours right!” “March!” and the battalion would step briskly away headed by the band, the drum major leading the way, and the work of the department would close for the year.

It is little wonder that the colleges of Ohio looked askance at the growth of the departments of the flourishing Normal School at Ada. The colleges of that period, for the most part, presented courses only in Liberal Arts and Music. Courses in bookkeeping may have been taught in some of them, but they did not advertise full commercial courses and equipment for practical office work. At that period only the large universities in the East presented full courses in Surveying and Engineering and in Law. Special courses in Pharmacy were rare indeed.

The colleges naturally were exceedingly critical, almost to the point of contempt. That attitude later changed to one of concern. The president of a wealthy Liberal Arts college once very thoughtfully asked Mr. Lehr how he started the departments. Mr. Lehr’s reply was characteristic of his direct manner of saying and doing things; said he, “We just started them.”

In view of the phenomenal growth of the various departments, the Northwestern Ohio Normal School in the spring of 1885 put into effect an important change in the organization of the school. In regard to this Mr. Lehr says: “We changed the name of the school from Northwestern Ohio Normal School to Ohio Normal University. We substituted ‘Ohio’ for ‘Northwestern’ because our patronage was no longer confined to one section of the state but embraced the whole of Ohio and extended far beyond the borders of the state. The pre-
ceeding year we had enrolled students from twenty-one states and two foreign countries. We retained the name 'Normal' because normal means natural, and we endeavored to follow natural methods in the teaching, organization, methods, and management of the school.

"After much consideration the word 'University' was used. At least two factors are necessary to constitute a true university; the one, a collection or combination of colleges giving instruction in many lines of learning and preparation for life; the other, special and extensive opportunities for original investigation. The Normal School at Ada in 1885 embraced a collection of colleges. We then had what we called the Literary, Commercial, Engineering, Music, Fine Arts, Telegraphic, Stenographic, Law, Military, (and the Pharmaceutical in prospect), Departments—in all ten colleges in which was given instruction in their respective lines of culture. We lacked in a great measure the apparatus and laboratory equipment required for original investigation, but many of the universities of that day lacked both factors and were merely colleges and minor colleges at that.

"We not only changed the name of the school but we incorporated it May 21, 1885, as an 'institution of learning not for profit'. We then no longer owned the school as individuals but as incorporators and were obliged to elect trustees who would hold the property in trust. No one of the owners could now sell his share of the property. There were five incorporators, H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, Frederick Maglott, Rachel Stringfellow, and Warren Darst. Mrs. Stringfellow and Professor Darst each owned an eighth at the time of incorporation. The law specified that incorporators must elect a board of trustees; we elected ourselves trustees. Our legal adviser informed us that it was not customary for the trustees of such a corporation to elect themselves instructors and charge salaries. However, he said trustees could be paid their traveling expenses. As we had to travel from our homes to the school buildings frequently and board ourselves, we divided among ourselves what proceeds were left after paying all the expenses of properly conducting the institution. There was no endowment—no income of any kind whatsoever, except from tuition.

"Why did we thus incorporate? Because before incorporating we could not legally, and did not, confer degrees of any name or kind. We now had the legal right to confer any degree as much as any church or state college or university. The laws of Ohio demanded that there be five trustees. When Warren Darst bought the good-will of Rachel Stringfellow we elected a business man of Ada as the fifth trustee; he remained in his store and charged no 'traveling expenses'. The reader can readily see why we incorporated, but it was a dangerous risk for the owners. Had any three trustees at any time conspired they could have ejected or failed to re-elect any member as a trustee or instructor and could have elected someone else in his stead."

There was, however, no danger of a conspiracy at that time as there was almost perfect unanimity among the trus-
tees for many years. No public announcement was made in regard to the acquired right to confer degrees, but the change in the name was well received and gave a new impulse to the attendance. Again the lack of adequate room for expansion was felt.

The teaching force now numbered twenty-eight. In the beginning, as was the custom in small schools just after the Civil War, the teachers had to attempt to teach something in every department of the whole course of human knowledge, but now each instructor had his specialty that he might perfect himself in his work. Such a corps of teachers seldom were assembled in one institution. Every one of them was not only well prepared in his line of work, but everyone of them had a strong personality, or “heart power,” as Mr. Lehr called that indefinable quality that attracted others as a magnet draws steel. All of them knew how to inspire discussion in the class room. Each of them was interested in the student for the student’s sake. A school that had no endowment, that existed on merit only, could not afford to have teachers who were frigid and unapproachable.

Mr. Lehr was a past-master in the art of selecting teachers. Those chosen usually bore the impress of his own zeal and self-sacrifice. The older teachers were like fathers and mothers to the students; the younger ones, like brothers and sisters. The excellence of the teaching personnel was a mighty force in the upbuilding of the Ohio Normal University.

The salary these teachers received was not very large, but they had a comfortable living. Most of them remained in Ada year after year, and gradually acquired their own homes. A roster of these noble teachers would reveal a galaxy of devoted men and women, who taught for the very love of imparting knowledge. Few of them possessed more than one academic degree, but all of them possessed enough of the philosophy of education to know that the student was important and that his welfare and satisfaction was the main business of the institution.
CHAPTER THIRTEEN

PERSONAL GLIMPSES

"Great days those (the '80's at Ada)! They entered mightily into the making of men."—
DR. ELMER E. HELMS, Pastor First Methodist Church, Los Angeles, California.

As has been said before, there was no income of any kind coming to the institution other than from tuition. There were no gifts to the Ohio Normal University with the exception of books for the libraries and occasionally curios and specimens for the museum and laboratories. Instead of receiving gifts, the Faculty was continually called upon as a body to give contributions to various causes. If a church was to be built in the neighborhood, if an oil well was to be drilled in the county, or if any public fund of any kind was being raised, the Faculty was asked for a donation and was expected to give it.

Most of the students were the sons and daughters of farmers, and though they had little money to spend, they did not seem to feel the lack of it. There was no aristocracy, no class distinction. The literary societies supplied the social life and the literary impetus. The Military Department served in a way in place of athletics. There had been no fraternities, nor had they been so much as mentioned.

Sometime in May, 1886, a committee of three leading students called on Mr. Lehr and asked whether he would object to the organization of a college fraternity. He knew little about fraternities as there had been none connected with the colleges he had attended at the time he was a student. So unimportant did the request appear to him that he gave his consent for the organization without even mentioning the matter to the other members of the Faculty. His surprise, then, may well be imagined, when a few days later as he was about to conduct the chapel exercises, he heard a series of cat calls, hisses, and outcries arising from the audience. Looking up, he saw eighteen of the best known students marching down the aisle, wearing the insignia of the Kappa Sigma fraternity. With difficulty quiet was restored, but there was bitter resentment and factional feeling. Later a near riot occurred at the village hotel, where the fraternity had headquarters. Several hundred of the students gathered there to protest. Mr. Lehr had to admit that he had given his consent for the organization. The students criticized him sharply; the other members of the Faculty were loyal to him, though they were frank to tell him that he should have consulted them.

The students were opposed to anything that savored of class distinction. The literary societies, hitherto the controlling social element, considered the entrance of a frater-
nity a direct affront. They at once called a conjoint meeting and added an amendment to the constitutions forever prohibiting a fraternity man from becoming a member of any of the literary societies. Later, after the fraternity had disbanded and agitation had died down, the “antis” passed a peace resolution extending to the members of the fraternity an assurance that they held them in the same relation as had existed previous to their organization.

Mr. Lehr was ever mindful that the Board of Education had taxed the town and district to erect a building for the Normal School, and felt duty bound to stand by the town in every way. For many years he was a member of the town council, and on Monday nights when the village bell tolled to call the “city fathers” together, he responded to the call. He wanted to help reduce the financial burden of the town, and beyond that, he hoped to be able to devise ways and means of meeting the ever-present problem of the liquor traffic. On election day he was usually up at four in the morning and out to solicit votes to abolish the saloon. He would drive miles into the country to bring voters to the polls.

The catalogue of 1884 had announced that the saloons had been voted out of town and circulars had been sent out to that effect. That was true, but the village council was having a fight to suppress the “blind tigers”, as the illicit places for selling liquor were called. In 1888 every member of the council lost a building by fire. But the fight against the saloons went on with renewed vigor and determination. Detectives were hired, and the places raided.

Mr. Lehr’s personal interest in his students attracted the attention of many parents who had problem children. They would write to him saying they were unable to control their children; they had heard he was successful in training young men and women and—would he accept their son or daughter as a student? He would reply that most of the students at Ada “came”, they were not “sent” and that they were diligent and hard working and that this spirit was contagious; he would usually add that the careless students either awakened to their responsibilities while here, or soon left, as they found they were not wanted here.

Such students, however, sometimes were sent by their parents; and they, with others of like character who came on their own initiative, caused him much anxiety, because they would insist on drinking or gambling. Often the Lehr doorbell would ring at midnight or later, and Mr. Lehr would be called out to look after some of the boys who had gotten into trouble. On numerous occasions threats were made against his life because of his opposition to the saloon, and at one time plans were completed to slug him as he passed a dark alley on his way home, but one of the gang “tipped him off,” warning him to go home by a different route. Occasionally a student was expelled, most frequently for drinking or gambling, rarely for stealing or general worthlessness. No registered student was permitted to stay about town if he persisted in absenting himself from classes.

There was one case of expulsion that Mr. Lehr never
forgot. A tall, heavily built student was expelled for drinking and other gross misdemeanors. As he went out of the office door after being dismissed, he paused, and shaking his fist, muttered threateningly, "The next time I see you, Mr. Lehr, I'll settle with you for this." Usually Mr. Lehr had no fear but the young man's big eyes glared with such hatred that sometimes Mr. Lehr spoke of it with dread. Some years later, at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, as Mr. Lehr was ascending a stairway in one of the buildings, he glanced up and just above him saw this fellow looking down at him.

Mr. Lehr winced; the man above had the advantage, and there was no one near-by. The man descended and, raising his hand, said, "Do you remember that I said I would settle with you the next time I saw you?"

Mr. Lehr quietly replied, "Yes."

"Well," he said, taking Mr. Lehr's hand, "I was angry when I left your office and determined to take revenge, but the counsel you gave me at that time was the turning point of my life. I saw my mistake and determined to reform."

He went on to say that he was prospering in business and was a church member. Such confessions were not unusual; but they never ceased to thrill the heart of the President of the Ohio Normal University.

In the early days, when Mr. Lehr taught so many classes, he had known each student personally, but as the institution grew larger he no longer had the acquaintance arising from contact in the classroom, yet he still knew most of them by name and looked after their welfare and comfort. It was the passion of his life to serve; he was never too busy or too tired to do some act of kindness; among his students he was "as one who served." Here is a fragment of a letter from a student of the '90's which illustrates this trait of his character:

"Professor, do you remember the winter we had a kind of coal famine in Ada? Well if you do, do you remember that my roommate and I needed coal at the time and could not get any, and that I came to your office and asked you for coal when you had scarcely enough to run the furnaces in the college buildings and you directed me elsewhere with sincere hopes that I would be successful? And do you remember that you thought of us boys and came to our room at ten o'clock that cold night wondering whether we had secured fuel to keep us warm? Well, I do. And you taught me in that one act one of the noblest lessons I ever learned. That a college president should thus look after . . ." (F.S.) (The remainder of the letter is lost.)

Scores of letters of appreciation—or rather, hundreds of them—were written to Mr. Lehr thanking him for his kindly interest, counsel, guidance, financial help, and care in time of illness. Unfortunately these letters, though long cherished by Mr. Lehr, were not preserved to the time of the preparation of this narrative. There was one letter that, because of its exceptionally grateful tone, was long remembered by Mr. Lehr and his family. There had been an outbreak of typhoid fever among the students. A young man became dangerously ill and his sister came to take care of
him. Mr. Lehr, because of his hospital experience in the
army and his knowledge of medicine, was skilled in nurs-
ing the sick and usually was able to diagnose the ills of the
students and to prescribe for them.

During the illness of this young man, Mr. Lehr, in the
midst of many duties, sat beside the sick student’s bed do-
ing all a parent could have done. Finally, when a council of
physicians said all hope was gone, Mr. Lehr had knelt by his
bedside and prayed. He recovered, and his sister—in a let-
ter written years later—recalled this and expressed the
family’s gratitude for the care and attention, the careful
nursing, and for prayer.

Some anecdotes printed in the Ada Record many years
later are of interest:

“In 1891 I climbed the stairs to the executive office.
A dapper little man greeted me, asked me my business,
and in a few minutes I had paid my tuition and had a
receipt for it which I was told to carry with me; he put
on his hat and overcoat, remarking, ‘Come and go with
me and I will get you a room and place to board.’ He
was halfway down the stairs when I reached the first
steps. It was only a few more minutes until I was locat-
ed in a room and arrangements had been made for me to
get my meals. The same man who found me a room
and boarding place called on me later during an illness
when I was confined to my bed. That same evening a
boy brought a little pail of milk, saying ‘Professor Lehr
sent you this.’ And that milk—well those who knew
him at that time, know what kind of cows he kept.

“When I entered the Ohio Normal University I ar-
ried in the middle of the term, so the organization of
classes at chapel at the beginning of the term was yet
in store for me. On the first day of the next term when
the classes were arranged I was an interested spectator.
Everybody seemed pretty well taken care of except a
few fellows who wanted a class in Caesar B; at every
turn there was a conflict in the program. Hesitating a
moment, Professor Lehr said, ‘Well I’ll fix that; I’ll take
the class at half past five in the morning. You fellows
who want Caesar B come to my office immediately after
chapel’.” (J. A. A.)

In connection with the incident just related it is inter-
esting to note that on the first morning of each term Mr.
Lehr would spend several hours arranging classes—no
small task, as there were from eighty to a hundred recita-
tions each day. The large classes in the common branches,
which were especially for the instruction of teachers in the
elementary grades, recited at fixed periods and were never
changed. Other classes not so large, such as those in geom-
etry, Latin, rhetoric, and other academic subjects, were
placed on a schedule at certain periods, but were subject to
change. The smaller classes for more advanced students
were shifted from one hour to another to accommodate the
largest number desiring the class. The departments of
Pharmacy, Engineering, Commerce, and the other special
departments arranged their work in their recitation rooms.
Usually the schedule in the Literary or Arts Department
was in order by ten o’clock in the morning, and the classes
reciting. Those who were not yet satisfied with their work convened again at six that night; if need be, on the second morning another attempt would be made to arrange acceptably for them. There was no time wasted in getting started; no parent could have been more solicitous over his child’s welfare than Mr. Lehr was to see that each student’s time was conserved and that he found satisfaction.

At chapel on the first Friday morning of each term he would announce the location and services of the various churches of the town, giving no more prominence to his own church than to any other. No special church meetings of any denomination were ever announced at chapel.

On that first Friday morning, too, he would give the students a brief heart to heart talk, counseling them to write to their parents over the week-end. (No one thought of going home over week-ends even in the ’90’s.) He would picture to them how the parents sat at home in the evening talking of the absent son or daughter, wondering about their welfare and surroundings.

Though he dealt with the personal problems of so many hundreds of young men and women, he ever remained sympathetic and kind. Their burdens did not become commonplace to him; he listened carefully to the problems that were brought to him and was ready with wise and kind counsel.

He had little time for reading but managed to keep his mind refreshed by companionship with the best thought of all time. He had small pocket editions of the Classics, which he carried with him—Plato, Aristotle, Marcus Aurelius; he was especially fond, too, of Plutarch’s Lives. The Bible he prized above all books, for he felt that he found therein the basis of all wisdom. Never a day passed but he read a portion from its pages, besides the daily readings at morning devotions, for the Lehr household had family worship every morning; it was a custom as fixed as the breakfast which followed it.

Because of greatly multiplied responsibilities in the management and conduct of the institution Mr. Lehr now taught only two or three hours a day, sometimes less, one of his classes usually reciting at half past seven, or eight o’clock in the evening, and another at half past six in the morning. That left the day free for other duties. (Breakfast in the Lehr home was always served at six or a trifle later. Mrs. Lehr always arose at half past five to see that her husband had a substantial breakfast; she never left the preparation of meals solely to another.)

Every morning not later than half past seven, Mr. Lehr made a tour of the school buildings, to see that everything was in order. One morning as he glanced into Chapel Hall, he noticed a chicken feather on the floor near the organ. He at once suspected that some one had put a chicken inside the organ. He could not investigate as the large teacher training class, with an enrollment of a hundred or more, was coming in for recitation. He simply whispered a few words of warning to the instructor, telling him to allow no one to come to the platform. At half past eight when chapel convened, the hall was well filled. Chapel was not compulsory as the hall was far too small to accommodate all of
the students. Sometimes it was crowded; at other times only comfortably filled. On this particular morning Mr. Lehr quietly admonished the professor who led the music to conduct the singing without the organ. He made no reference to the fact that anything was out of the ordinary, but after dismissing chapel he quietly advised each professor who had classes in the hall during the forenoon to keep the platform clear; at noon when the last member of the last class had gone, he went to the organ, took out the hen and set her free. Nothing was ever said about it; no doubt the guilty person often wondered who had spoiled his joke.

In the late ’90’s the pharmacy students, at night, put a cow in the chemical laboratory. The news spread rapidly by “underground telegraph,” and though it was a cold, snowy morning, Chapel Hall was jammed; every available space was taken; students lined the walls two and three deep. Calmly and with his accustomed reverence Professor Lehr conducted the devotional exercises. He read the names of the “absentees” from classes as usual and made the regular announcements. The “boys” feared he was going to dismiss without even mentioning their joke, and notes by the score were passed up to him asking him about it. Quietly and deliberately he opened the notes, glanced at them, folded them, and laid them aside. Presently, holding up a large bunch of notes, he said, “I have some questions here; all I care to say is that the ‘cow usually follows the calves.’” Nothing more was said. The old hall rocked with cheers, and the incident was closed.

Mr. Lehr considered it remarkable that the “cow stories” were retold so often, frequently with great elaboration. He said:

“I have heard scores of students tell how they helped to put cows and calves into Chapel Hall. I smile and let them talk, but I know the ‘cow stories’ thoroughly. The school year of 1899-1900 was the actual ‘cow year.’ That was the only time a cow was ever put inside the building and a calf never, unless some thoughtless boy might be called a calf.

‘Occasionally I hear stories told that are new and exceedingly strange. At a recent Congressional Convention a group of Ohio Normal University boys were relating their pranks; one of them told how Prexy ‘got even’ with the boys on a certain Hallowe’en night. He related how they went to his carriage house, took out his surrey and pulled it back of the Union School building and as they were leaving, Prexy got up from between the seats and asked them to pull him back. It had never occurred, but I smiled and said nothing, and all enjoyed the story.

‘On another occasion a mother told me that it was her son who assisted in letting me drop some distance when I got in the basket the girls used when lifting their fellows to their windows. I did not correct her; nothing of the kind had ever occurred here. Many college stories are like many soldiers’ tales, and snake and fish stories.’

It might be of interest to note the attitude of the townpeople towards the president of “their” Normal School.
In 1889 the Lehr family erected a much needed residence. This house was admirably suited for student receptions, and for the entertainment of guests, of whom there was a never-ending stream. On the occasion of their moving into this house, the citizens of the village gave the family a royal reception and housewarming. Each speaker on the program that night spoke with warmth and good-will towards the professor and his family. One of the townsmen who differed from Mr. Lehr very decidedly in his political and religious views said of him:

"If Mr. Lehr has risen from a lower to a higher plain, no one has suffered thereby. He pitched his tent among us when but a mere youth, without means or fame. He took kindly with the people because of his lofty motives. As a citizen he is good-natured and public-spirited, and is ever ready and willing to aid in every public enterprise that would enhance the material interests, and be conducive to the social and moral welfare of the community. In short, he has played the part of a sort of father to his people." (H. Y.)

On the last day of the second fall term of 1889 the large brick building which had been erected by the town in 1879 caught fire. Mr. Lehr's algebra class had an examination that evening at half past six. He had given the questions to one of his daughters and had sent her to conduct the class as there were guests at supper. While the class was in session, suddenly the smoke poured through the register of the room like a great black cloud. The students arose and rushed to the hall; they hurried through the stifling black smoke, down the stairs and out-of-doors.

In the basement there were thirty tons of soft coal, a large quantity of kindling, and a large barrel about half full of kerosene. The fire was in the coal room, just at the foot of the back stairway, which ascended to the third story; the stairway, acting as a flue, was soon ablaze, and smoke was pouring from the windows all over the building. The village fire department came promptly, but the large fire engine was found to be out of order so only the small hand-engine could be used. Bucket brigades were formed, and every one responded to the call for help.

Mr. Lehr left the supper table and came hurrying to the scene. Calmly he approached the burning building and gave directions. Men, on ladders were lifting the ledgers out of the office windows. Soon the fire died down; no one could tell how. It had seemed impossible to stop it. Grim, blackened, smoke-stained walls and floors burned away told the story. Although there was much damage done there was no appeal for money. No one thought of asking for financial help. There was some insurance, and during the holiday season most of the traces of the fire were obliterated.

Years after the janitor of one of the literary societies wrote a letter confessing how the fire had started. He had gone to the store to buy kerosene but the store was closed, so he went to the Faculty oil barrel to borrow a little. He filled his can, lighted a match to see when it was filled, and carelessly threw the stub away. He knew he had spilled a little oil. He said he had scarcely turned away until there was a burst of flame in the cellar.
CHAPTER FOURTEEN

PUBLICITY

"I never noticed that politics was one of the studies mentioned in the school's catalogue, but the young men who have attended there (at Ada) seem to have learned the political game faster and play it with a higher degree of success than in any other institution that has come to my knowledge."—W. G. Vorpe, Sunday Editor, Cleveland Plain Dealer.

It will be recalled that Mr. Lehr at one time went to Washington to look after the interests of the Military Department. While there he was befriended by James E. Campbell, who later became governor of Ohio. During Mr. Campbell's candidacy for governor in 1890 Mr. Lehr went to a political meeting to have an interview with him. Quoting from his "Reminiscences":

"I told him that I had left my school work to come to tell him that I had not forgotten his kindness when we were in dire need of all the help we could get; and that although I was a Republican, I would take no part against him and that he could rest assured that I would not vote against him. As I now remember, I voted for neither candidate for governor and did not contribute to the Republican campaign fund that fall. My usual contribution was fifteen dollars. Mr. Campbell told me that day that he would always be glad to do a favor for the school. My Republican friends may criticize this action on my part, but I believe the ingrate to be the most despicable of all God's creatures, the meanest of all men.

"Campbell was elected. The next commencement I asked him to address the graduating class. He consented but was unavoidably detained and sent a substitute. However, he agreed to address the class the next year. When he was re-nominated for governor I went to see him and asked him whether he would be willing to meet Major McKinley, who was the Republican candidate for governor, in joint debate at Ada, instead of addressing the class, stating that it would greatly advertise and benefit the school.

"His reply was, 'Will the Major accept?' I assured him that the Major could hardly afford to refuse to discuss the issue of the campaign before the students of such a large school.

"Mr. Campbell said, 'If it is any accommodation to you, I shall meet the Major in joint debate, but you must arrange the matter with the Major and explain to him that I consent to meet him in a joint debate because
you greatly desire it to advertise your school.' To all of this there was ready consent.

"I wrote to Major McKinley and told him that Governor Campbell was willing to meet him in a joint debate at Ada on the issues of the day; that the Governor had consented at my earnest solicitation; and that it would be of great advantage to our school. The Major replied by saying that he was not favorable to joint debates as little, if any, good ever came of them.

"Shortly after the Major delivered an address in a near-by town, and I was enabled to have a personal interview with him. I recalled to him the work I had done in his behalf among my friends in eastern Ohio. After much persuasion he consented to engage in the debate. As I sat by his side he wrote this letter:

"Kenton, O., Aug. 29, 1891

"Dear Sir:

"Replying to your invitation to meet Gov. Campbell in joint debate, on the issues dividing the Republican and Democratic parties, at Ada, which you advise me you have already arranged with the Governor, I beg to say it will give me pleasure to meet the Governor at the place named on such date as the State Committee will arrange, not to interfere with the appointments already made.

"Very truly,

William McKinley'."

After much correspondence with the committees of both parties, it was finally agreed that the debate was to take place on October 8, 1891, and was to last three hours. Governor Campbell was to open in one hour and five minutes, Major McKinley to follow in one and one-half hours, then Governor Campbell to close in twenty-five minutes. The agreement was signed by the chairmen of the Republican and Democratic state committees respectively. These gentlemen had been unable to agree as to which of the speakers should open and close the debate so the matter was decided by lot, Mr. Lehr tossing a silver half dollar. The debate was to take place on the Fair Grounds at the edge of town. It was much more difficult to get the consent of the Republican Committee on a number of points than of the Democratic Committee. Many Republicans and some Democratic papers opposed Ada as the place on the ground that the town was too small. Numerous other towns and cities were proposed, but the Governor stood firm for Ada.

Mr. Lehr made no secret of it that he had arranged the debate not only for the instruction of his students, but as an advertisement for his institution as well. The Columbus Ohio Press, in commenting on this, said: "Joint debates between candidates are usually arranged between the respective party committees. That enterprising Normal School professor, who has tried to work some advertising for his school out of the matter, has done gratuitous work. As an advertiser he is a great success. Not in the history of Ohio politics has a political campaign been so successfully turned into an advertising scheme by any individual concern."

The great day dawned cool and clear. On the previous day, there had been a cold drizzle which rather dampened
the enthusiasm of those who were placing the decorations of flags and bunting on houses and stores. Arches of welcome had been erected over the main street through which the carriages of the speakers were to pass. One arch bore these words, “Education, the hope of the Nation”; another, “Discussion, the safety valve of the Republic”; and another, “To be chosen by one’s compatriots is a greater honor than to be born a king.”

Major McKinley was the first to arrive. Coming directly from Canton, he was met by Mr. Lehr at ten o’clock in the forenoon, and was driven directly to Mr. Lehr’s home, escorted by the military cadets of the University. Governor Campbell’s special train was delayed and did not reach the town until after one o’clock. He too was at once driven under military escort to the Lehr home, the bands in attendance playing “The Campbells Are Coming.”

Mr. Lehr had engaged a caterer from Cincinnati to prepare a luncheon for not less than 150 persons and an elaborate dinner in the evening. The candidates with their special friends, all of the newspaper men, editors, reporters, and the county committees were invited to the luncheon. The speakers and a few invited guests were at the table in the dining room; the reporters and others were served on the verandas and lawn.

After luncheon everyone went to the Fair Grounds, escorted by the five companies of the military battalion and the state clubs that had come for the debate, bringing their own bands. A salute of thirteen guns was fired by the ar-
tillery squad of the Military Department as the speakers’ carriages passed the campus.

The Associated Press and United Press had made careful preparations for reporting the debate. The Pennsylvania Railroad freight office had been transformed into a telegraph office from which over 200,000 words were sent out. Every three minutes four messengers, mounted on bicycles, carried copy from the grounds to the office where twenty telegraph operators were at work.

The Debate began about two o’clock and continued throughout the afternoon. The sun was beginning to go down before Governor Campbell had finished his response, and the autumn air was becoming sharp and cool. The speakers and their friends then went in carriages to the home of President Lehr where they were to have dinner. The dinner was an elaborate affair of nine courses in keeping with the traditions of those days.

The various political clubs, both Democratic and Republican, having escorted the debaters to President Lehr’s home, remained on the verandas and lawn throughout the dinner hour, their bands playing stirring music. The newspaper reporters also remained there for a last report; before they left, they called Mr. Lehr out on the lawn and formed a circle around him. A Chicago reporter acted as spokesman. “We know what you want—you want to advertise your school. We met here at one o’clock and resolved that if you would ask us to write up your college we would ignore it entirely, but you have said nothing. You gave us a fine lunch, provided messenger boys for both parties, treat-
ed Democrats and Republicans alike—now watch the papers tomorrow.” True to their word the press all over the country from New York and Boston, as far west as St. Louis, and as far south as Atlanta, Georgia, gave most kindly notices to the University, plentifully illustrated with pictures of the buildings, the cadets of the Military Department, the large crowd attending the debate, the speakers, guests, visiting bands and clubs. Some of them gave an entire page to illustrations, notably Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper (New York), The Pittsburg Dispatch and the Chicago Tribune.

Clippings from the press are of interest. From the Toledo Blade: “Tin cans, tin badges, tin fans, lithographs of McKinley, beside photographs of Campbell; red badges, white badges, blue badges—they are all there today... It is the political debate of the year; it might be truly said, the event of the decade. Joint debates have fallen into a sort of desuetude of late. Ohio remembers the Foraker-Hoadley contest, but it was nothing to this. A nation is waiting for the outcome, and today Ada is the center around which the political world revolves. Not since the time when Douglas and Lincoln went throughout Illinois, and Lincoln enunciated these great truths which live to this day—that a nation could not live half slave and half free, that there was an irrepressible conflict—not since that time has there been an event like this.”

From the St. Louis Globe Democrat: “This little village of Ada, Ohio, has today within its borders the largest crowd of people in its history. There are but few manufac-

turing establishments here, and if it were not for the college the grass would grow under the sidewalks and the business men read almanacs... The Duckworth Club of Cincinnati and other visiting clubs were late in arriving. One of the finest displays was made by the Scioto Club of Kenton, a Democratic organization. They wore black clothes, light linen dusters, and black silk hats, and carried heavy hickory canes. The debate was held at the Fair Grounds under a tent (provided in case of rain) and near the grandstand. The seating capacity was fifteen thousand, and all seats were taken while many stood during the entire three hours of the debate. The crowd was variously estimated at from fifteen thousand to twenty thousand. On the stage were a number of members of the legislature, state officers, local politicians and the like.”

From the Chicago Daily Tribune: “At two o'clock or thereabouts one of Professor Lehr's cannon began blazing away, signifying the approach of the orators. There was a rustle and a shuffle of chairs on the speakers' stand, a prolonged roar and 'Jimmy' Campbell made his appearance. A second more and McKinley came, and the cheer gathered in volume until it shook the leaves on the trees... The preliminaries were quickly arranged, and as soon as a half dozen noisy bands had been squelched, Governor Campbell led off. Without wasting any words he started out with a denunciation of the tariff. He rattled off his figures so rapidly Major McKinley with his stub of a lead pencil and envelope couldn't keep trace of him... "The Governor asked, 'Is there a farmer here who is better off than he was in 1880?'"
“A thousand brawny hands went up with shouts of ‘Yes, yes, here we are!’

“You are better off, a man down there said, ‘with more mortgages and sheriff’s sales.’ (Great laughter).

“I venture to say there is not a farmer in Ohio who is as well off as he was ten years ago. I want every laboring man here who has had his wages raised since the passage of the McKinley Bill to stand up so we can see them.’ No affirmative responses were heard and the Major scratched his chin reflectively. . . .

“‘Time,’ said the time-keeper, and Governor Campbell sat down. Professor Lehr threw an overcoat around the Governor’s shoulders and a buffalo robe over his limbs.

“A tempest of cheers greeted the Major, and it took a long time to get the audience into some kind of order. He began by a brief declaration of Republican principles on the tariff and silver. Governor Campbell drew near the table and made note of what the Major had to say . . . For twenty minutes the Major spoke of silver, saying he and the Governor both favored free coinage years ago. Now the Governor was wrong. (Great applause). ‘The tariff bill is a year old today,’ he said, ‘it speaks for itself. It is no longer a declamation; it is demonstration now.’ He made several decisive points against Governor Campbell’s argument as to the alleged depreciation of farm lands saying if any farmer felt aggrieved at the low valuation of his property for taxation he wanted him to stand up. He would also be pleased to see any farmer who was willing to sell his land at the figure put upon it ten years ago. . . . The timekeeper called time and the Major sat down. The good Professor Lehr grabbed him and getting him into a chair smothered him with overcoat and the buffalo robe which Governor Campbell had just thrown aside. Then the Governor arose for his closing remarks.

“The air was colder and more nipping than ever, but the crowd remained as it had all the afternoon, most intently taking in every word the speakers uttered. Then came the colloquy about the proposed reduction in the duty on sugar as contemplated by the Mills Bill. . . . Cries were heard, ‘Give us something about wool, talk about silver.’

“The governor continued, ‘When Major McKinley was nominated he said he believed wool would be 40 cents a pound. The trouble is now to find the fellow who would pay the 40 cents. . . .’ He closed with the statement that tea and coffee were free under Democratic administration before the (Civil War. . . .”

The Daily Shield and Banner, Mansfield, Ohio, said, “The University did not suffer any by the joint debate; there is a very Lehr-ned as well as shrewd man at its head.”

This was the most successful advertising promotion ever carried out by the Ohio Normal University. Mr. Lehr always was active in politics, not only in the interest of his party, the state and the nation, but also because it was necessary for one situated as he was to have many “friends at court”. His school was uncrowned; he had no church or group of any kind behind him to aid him financially. Many things had to be brought to pass by diplomacy. He
made no secret of it. Not that selfish motives dominated his interest in securing friends for the institution—he just naturally made friends wherever he made contacts.

In the matter of advertising he found it advisable to avail himself of every opportunity that would bring favorable publicity to the school he had founded.

In both of the major political parties he had many friends. Ada had become distinguished as an important political center. For many years the students who gained a legal residence in the village had the privilege of voting. Thus at that time the school controlled a large number of votes. Besides this, many of the graduates had been elected to office and their influence offered valuable contribution to their particular party.

Political speakers who came to Ada during a campaign were usually entertained at the Lehr home, regardless of party affiliations, and were invited to speak to the students at chapel. This was true, also of many of the speakers on the lecture course, and of other visitors. Chapel convened every morning but as has been said before was not compulsory. If an unusually interesting speaker was to be present, Mr. Lehr would go quickly to as many of the seventy or eighty boarding houses as he could reach during the breakfast hour and invite the students to come to chapel. The hall would be filled with attentive listeners; hearty cheers and applause would greet the speakers and a new friend for the institution would be gained.

Such friends proved most valuable when legislation was needed or when it seemed to the best interest of the institution to suppress certain proposed laws. Every added friend meant an added kind word for the school.

The literary societies, too, with their friendly rivalry and zeal for adding to their membership provided fine publicity. No planned method of advertising could have secured such far-reaching results.

Thus the matter of the advertising of the Ohio Normal University for the most part was taken care of naturally and freely by means of friends who had felt the warmth and genuine wholeheartedness of the institution. But beyond all studied methods of advertising, Mr. Lehr knew that a satisfied student was the very best advertisement any institution could possibly have; the students at Ada were satisfied.

Of course the ordinary methods of sending circulars and catalogues were not neglected. All correspondence was carefully followed up. Advertisements were placed regularly in the leading farm journals of Ohio and also in some of the popular magazines, Mr. Lehr always writing the advertisements himself and devising the lay-out. A copy of an advertisement used for many years follows:

**Ohio Normal University**

Do you want an education—Classical, Scientific, Business, Stenographic, Legal, Military, Pharmaceutical, Musical, or Fine Arts? Do you want to be a teacher or an engineer, civil or electrical? Do you want to educate your children? If so send for catalogue of the Ohio Normal University, Ada, O., one of the largest and best schools in the country. Last annual enrollment
3,349; 26 states represented; also several foreign countries. Advantages unexcelled, expenses low. Will furnish room, good board in private families, and tuition 10 weeks for $28; 49 weeks $118. Has University powers and confers all degrees. Teachers thorough and experienced. Students can enter at any time to advantage. Classes in every grade including advanced classes in Mathematics, the Sciences, Latin, Greek, German and French are sustained every term. If things are not found as represented will pay traveling expenses. Send for catalogue. H. S. LEHR, President, Ada, Ohio.

Early in 1892 the Faculty of the Ohio Normal University learned through the United States Commissioner of Education that educational institutions would have an opportunity to prepare exhibits for the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The circular stated explicitly that the exhibit should be the work of students only and not an exhibit of museums or photographs of buildings and campus. Some of the professors thought it unwise to attempt a display or exhibit of any kind, as they felt it would be useless to compete with the wealthy endowed colleges and universities; but the Faculty finally decided to accept the invitation and asked for floor space in the Arts building. The teachers of English had their students write essays; those studying geography prepared maps; the instructor in fine arts selected some fine pictures painted by his students; a member of the class in botany prepared a distinctive type of herbarium; Mrs. Eva Magrott, professor of higher mathematics, had her students execute under her supervision, intricate figures in analytics from silk threads and fine steel wires; the students of engineering sent blue prints and specimens in projection drawing. The College of Pharmacy declined to participate, deeming it impossible to win against more wealthy competitors, so also the College of Law and some other departments.

Professor Park and Mrs. Magrott went to Chicago in April to install and arrange the exhibit, which was placed in a booth in the second gallery of the building devoted to Mechanical and Fine Arts. Much, if not all, of the space of one side of that gallery was given to educational work. On the front row facing the railing of the balcony in an advantageous position was the Ohio Normal University booth, with its display admirably arranged.

When the judges on awards entered the Ohio Normal University booth, they found that all of the exhibits had been made in accordance with the instructions of the United States Commissioner of Education, and consisted of the work of students. Some of the universities, unmindful of that direction, had sent only photographs of their buildings and campus. The judges were especially pleased with the devices for mathematical work. No other university had presented such an exhibit, with the exception of one of the great German universities.

The Ohio Normal University received a blue ribbon and a medal. A facsimile of the official blue ribbon was used on the front of the catalogue that year and for a number of years following. The award was for “Students’ Work and Geometrical Devices.”
At the close of the Exposition, the commissioner of education wrote to Mr. Lehr asking who had devised the Ohio Normal University exhibit in mathematics. Later, Mrs. Eva Maglott received a special diploma honoring her as the originator and designer of the unique display which won the special award in geometrical devices for the Ohio Normal University.

The award and its consequent publicity was a splendid advertisement and stimulated the attendance, especially in the Department of Civil Engineering. The other departments too felt the impetus, as the award for “students' work” appealed to many who were interested in a thorough and practical education in any line.

The need for another building was now so imperative that it seemed impossible to go on without it. The departments of Music, Elocution, Commerce, Telegraphy and Fine Arts were all housed in rooms rented about town. Mr. Lehr tried again to interest men of wealth in his project.

Among his friends was a wealthy United States Senator with whom he had been on friendly terms since the Civil War. He made a proposition to this gentleman, asking him directly to assist in the erection of a building, the edifice to be named as a memorial to the Senator. There was much correspondence and there were several interviews. Mr. Lehr said:

"The Senator, after having made a careful study of the charter of the Ohio Normal University, said, 'I see the situation. You chartered the school, but you still virtually own it. You elected yourselves trustees, which is not the general method. If I or anyone else should erect a building under present conditions, you could sell all the property to other parties and pocket the money. I will, however, agree to do this. I will donate $15,000 to put up a building to cost $25,000, the Faculty to donate or raise $10,000. The building, as you say, is to be given my name; but you must allow me and any others who donate to appoint or elect the trustees. I am willing to permit the present Board of Trustees to remain as trustees, but you must be in the minority. On these conditions I shall make the donation; I think I can interest one of your friends who is also a friend of mine to donate liberally. Present what I have said to your associates and report to me.'"

"I reported. His proposition was not accepted. One of the Faculty made an objection something like this: 'The new Board of Trustees could at any time limit our term of service as trustees to a certain number of years and any of our number, or all of us, might not be re-elected and further, doubtless they would put us on salaries such as they might choose to pay or not elect us at all and appoint or elect some of their political friends.'

And what the member said was true although I had no special fears."

A short time thereafter the Senator gave a large gift to an institution in south western Ohio. Notwithstanding this disappointment Mr. Lehr still hoped to secure the needed building in some way.
The great World's Fair at Chicago had brought together people from all over the United States and from many foreign countries. The interchange of ideas was the precursor of many changes in the social, industrial, and educational world.

As we have seen in the previous pages of this narrative, in the early years of Mr. Lehr's work at Ada, he had met the immediate need of the rapidly growing rural communities of northwestern Ohio for teachers in the elementary schools, by offering courses in the common branches and in teacher training. Scores, even hundreds, of these teachers returned year after year to pursue advanced work, and gradually many of them completed one or more of the various courses offered. Up to the time of the Columbian Exposition the attendance in the Literary or Arts Department had exceeded that of all the special departments combined. Now however, while the great majority still came to pursue literary studies, an increasing percentage of the students entered for the special departments only.

In the Department of Engineering, which had especially profited by the publicity due to the award in mathematical devices, granted by the World's Columbian Exposition, the attendance was now greatly increased. Even before, this department had achieved a good report. For several years preceding the Exposition, a personal letter written by an official of one of the largest railroad systems in the country to an inquirer, had been printed in the catalogue by permission. In this letter, the writer recommended that prospective employees of their railroad be encouraged to study
engineering at the Ohio Normal University because of the practical work done in classroom and field. This letter—a purely personal one in which it was stated that their best men were trained here—had brought scores of young men to the department. Now that course became still more popular.

The Department of Pharmacy, because of legislation standardizing requirements for druggists, took such a leap in enrollment that it became imperative to enlarge the chemical laboratories at once. The Faculty, therefore, early in 1894 erected a large two-story frame building, the lower floor and basement to be used entirely for the Department of Pharmacy. The upper floor was given to the Adelphians for the literary hall, so greatly needed and so long awaited.

With the growth of the special departments and the consequent change in the personnel of the student body, a change in the attitude of the students toward the literary societies was noticeable. The engineers preferred to belong to a society that discussed subjects of special interest to them, and therefore formed a literary club for themselves. The law students were still interested in the literary societies because they offered opportunity for speaking before large audiences, but they also wanted societies of their own for discussion of legal problems and accordingly formed such a society. The pharmacy students seldom attended the old established societies. If they met for literary work, they preferred a private club. The Department of Music had its own recitals. The townspeople, who at first had been loyal supporters of the societies, both in attendance and perform-

ance, now that the large number of students made personal contacts and friendships more difficult, were beginning to organize their own literary clubs. Each department had its own coterie of friends, with many of the most interesting social affairs held by the five companies of the Military Department. The Christian Associations also had their own social gatherings.

The old societies, therefore, no longer furnished the sole literary activity of the school and village, nor did they supply the only social feature. Thus, these changes in the personnel of the students gradually diminished the former whole-hearted interest in the old literary societies. The soliciting for new members continued as in the past; solicitors would still go fifty miles and even more to the railroad junctions to meet the new students at the beginning of each term; they still met every train; and the membership of each society increased in the usual proportion.

Years before, with the advent of the third society, interest in the literary contests and pay entertainments had begun to lag, and now, interest in the fine society libraries also began to wane. It was evident that many students of this period did not care to read the literature and fiction of the Elizabethan and early Victorian periods, but were more interested in recent fiction, and in technical and scientific developments as discussed in current periodicals which were to be found in the University Reading Room. The libraries were still open on Saturday afternoons, and the halls were filled with large numbers of young people who met for a
social time, but not as many books were called for as in previous years.

The halls were attractively furnished and were well appointed for social gatherings. In the matter of furnishings there had always been great rivalry. Did one of the societies pay four hundred dollars for a handsome chandelier—the other at once bought one that cost a hundred dollars more; did one buy a Chickering piano—the other bought a fifteen-hundred-dollar Mason & Hamlin Grand. In the matter of stage draperies and furniture they did agree for years to have them uniform, and the fine red plush curtains and handsome plush covered chairs were a delight to the eye. Each year at commencement some picture or bit of statuary was added, and each group could well be proud of its hall.

The Franklins had a fine collection of statuary. This included busts of Milton, Irving, Burns, Clay, Lincoln, Beethoven, Mozart, a handsome group representing a scene from Shakespeare’s Merchant of Venice, and a large statue of Apollo which had been ordered from Paris; they had a life size bust of President Lehr, which had been executed by Lorado Taft, Chicago’s great sculptor; a fine oil painting of Benjamin Franklin adorned their platform and they had other pictures. The Philos were a close second in the possession of statuary, but they did not have as much. They specialized in oil paintings. On their rostrum was a fine portrait of President Lehr, and they also had portraits of a number of their members who had achieved distinction. The Adelphians had no statuary but they had some fine oil paintings, both portrait and landscape.

The Faculty never interfered with any move on the part of the societies as long as they kept within the bounds of their joint articles. Each was an institution by itself and managed its finances without consulting the Faculty. Funds were raised by such entertainments as their constitutions provided for, by membership fees, and by private gifts. To them had been given, years before, the privilege of managing the “Lecture Course” of the institution. A committee from each society was appointed to act conjointly in securing the best talent the Lyceum afforded in oratory and concert work. Such men as Joseph Cook, Gunsaulus, Bob Burdett, Tourgee, Major Henry C. Dane, and other celebrities of the period addressed large audiences, the literary halls frequently being thrown together by raising the panels of the partition that separated them. The course was popular with both townspeople and students and produced a profitable revenue to the societies. Occasionally the societies conducted excursions to various resorts, usually with financial advantage.

A great variety of experiences, circumstances and events had arisen from time to time in, through, and by the literary societies, but it remained for the class of '94 to present an entirely new variety. In the autumn of 1893, according to custom, the senior class was called for organization. For some years the Philos had not had the honor of having one of their members as class president. This year, as they had an aggressive leadership, they secured that and other offices
by superior diplomacy. The Franklins, when they realized
that they had been caught napping, maintained that they
found parliamentary illegalities in the class election, and
consequently contested it. For months the agitation con-
tinued. On several evenings a large portion of the student
body assembled in Chapel Hall to witness the parlia-
tmentary battle that was being waged so relentlessly. The Faculty
suggested that a full statement of affairs be sent to some
parliamentarian of distinction for his decision, but those
concerned failed to agree as to what statements were to be
sent.

The Faculty, unable to bring the factions together, show-
ed little interest in the proceedings and decided to have no
Class Day; but sometime in May the Philos handed the
Faculty a statement saying that they were willing to sub-
mit the matter to the Trustees of the Ohio Normal Uni-
versity and would abide by their decision and join the class
as though no difficulty had existed. The Franklins also sent
a statement from which a few items are quoted:

“We have been contending for principles and not for
any individual to act as president of the class. Circum-
stances might make it honorable to cease maintaining a
just position; but no circumstances can ever make it an
honor to accept a position that cannot be sus-
tained for one that can. Inasmuch as your decision in
reference to the senior class, rendered at chapel Thurs-
day morning was given without any parliamentary ba-
sis, inasmuch as your decision denies all claims for which
we have been contending and totally ignores our organ-
ization, therefore, we refuse to accept that decision as
settling the principles for which we have been contend-
ing and refuse to meet in conjoint session on the terms
proposed.”

In summing up the matter, Mr. Lehr said:

“All parties concerned were excellent students and
noble young men and women. We decided to have our
regular commencement exercises as usual with the ex-
ception of the Class Day program. On Class Day there
were three entirely distinct programs at the same hour
(one by each of the three literary societies). The unples-
asantness of the affair was apparently all forgotten on
the evening of Commencement Day.”

A situation very similar, but more extreme occurred in
1900. On this occasion there were two separate commence-
ment programs. The graduates, irrespective of society affil-
iations, attended the Senior Reception at President Lehr’s
home, and the baccalaureate sermon. The Franklins and
Adelphians united in their commencement exercises; the
Philos presented their program alone. Their programs com-
pleted, the Seniors individually went to the home of Presi-
dent Lehr for their diplomas. Sometimes these sons of the
Ohio Normal University were “too hard” for the Faculty
and especially for their wiry little president.

In the spring of 1895 the Republican party in Ohio
found itself in a series of factional fights. There were fif-
teen candidates in the field for the office of governor. Let-
ters began to pour in to Mr. Lehr from all over the state
asking him to allow his name to be used, as it was suppos-
ed he could easily carry the state for the Republicans because of his popularity with former students. He paid little attention to the letters at first, but sentiment became very strong in his favor. Notwithstanding his lack of interest, a “Lehr Headquarters” was established in Ada and “Lehr buttons” were prepared. Plans for a vigorous campaign were under way. Mr. Lehr then took the matter under careful consideration. He knew he was financially unable to enter a political campaign, but beyond that he felt he had been divinely led into the work he was already engaged in. Therefore he positively withdrew his name and threw his support to Asa S. Bushnell, who was nominated and elected.

This year (1895) brought still more political publicity to Mr. Lehr. At the annual commencement, in response to an invitation from Mr. Lehr, William Jennings Bryan of Nebraska addressed the graduating class. Mr. Lehr in presenting Mr. Bryan to the audience of several thousand that had assembled, introduced him as the next Democratic candidate for President of the United States. Mr. Bryan was pleased and acknowledged that this was his first introduction with that prediction.

The newspapers gave the “prediction” wide publicity. A year later, during Mr. Bryan’s campaign for the presidency, his train passed through Ada and stopped long enough for him to make a short speech. He spoke of Ada as being the place where his candidacy was first announced, of Mr. Lehr as being the “original Bryan man,” and of his ability to predict political futures and his general sagacity. The two men had a few words in private and the train passed on. The newspapers gave the occasion large headlines. Soon the report was current that Mr. Lehr had deserted the Republican party and had become a Democrat. The rumor persisted; some public statement was necessary. The Ohio State Journal of September 27, 1896, printed a letter written by Mr. Lehr under the heading, “From the Shoulder”:

“At the request of many of my friends I ask the privilege of making a statement in the columns of the State Journal, setting forth my position on the political questions of the day. It has been reported that I am the “original Bryan man” and also that I am in favor of the free and unlimited coinage of silver. I am not in favor of the free and unlimited coinage of silver at any ratio unless it be by the concurrent action of the civilized nations of the world. . .

“But why am I advertised as being the original Bryan man? I will explain. During the winter of 1893-94 I read a speech delivered by Mr. Bryan in the House of Representatives. Although I did not accept all of his premises, yet I recognized the fact that he was unusually gifted as an orator. I called two of my teachers, Professor Fess and Professor Willis into my office and said to them, ‘Bryan will be the next Democratic candidate for president; if the Democrats do not nominate him the Populists will.’

“In the spring of 1895 I requested Senator Calvin S.

1 Both men later became members of the United States Senate.
Brice to ask Mr. Bryan to deliver the address to our graduating class on Commencement. Mr. Bryan accepted the invitation. When I introduced him on Commencement Day I introduced him as the next Democratic candidate for president, and at the close of the address, I invited the members of the class to come and shake hands with him, as he might have the distribution of government patronage sometime in the future, or words to that effect.

"When it was announced some months later that Mr. Bryan would pass through our village on his campaign, and would stop and make a short address, I went to the railroad station as did many other citizens of our town. When he saw me he beckoned me to come to the platform of his car. I did so. He introduced me to his wife as 'the original Bryan man.' He spoke a few words. He looked at the crowd and the people looked at him. There was apparently no one of his own party there to present him. Without a second thought I introduced him but did not suppose my words would be heralded all over the country or I would have used different language, for I intend to vote for Mr. McKinley for president, and I believe that he will be elected."

It will be observed that Mr. Lehr mentions in this letter that Mr. Bryan had a few words of conversation with him as they stood there on the platform of the train. The subject of that brief talk was a private matter, but Mr. Lehr's family and a few of his personal friends knew that the "Great Commoner" had requested Mr. Lehr, in case the campaign resulted in his favor, to become a member of his cabinet as Secretary of the Treasury. Mr. Lehr's reply was not known even to those nearest to him, but he would not have deserted any of his principles for political honors.

Athletics up to the '90's had not presented any particular problem. A certain amount of physical exercise had been provided by the ordinary daily routine of most of the students. Coming for the most part from farms, they made their own fires; some of the men sawed and chopped their own wood; the girls kept their rooms in order and usually did their own washing. The Military Department, after its organization, provided a certain amount of exercise for the men; the girls sometimes had classes in club swinging and in "Delsarte", and occasionally they had a girls' Military company.

Mr. Lehr was a product of pioneer days; his physical exercise had consisted for the most part of hard work; he knew little or nothing about play. For his own recreation he went to his farm on Saturdays and worked in a "clearing". Often a number of the students accompanied him, not for the recreation such labor afforded, but for what they could earn, and in the autumn large numbers of men went to his farm and to other farms to husk corn.

As the campus was not suitable, he gave the men the use of his large cow pasture near town for a ball ground; many were the games played there, and occasionally there was a game at the Fair Grounds. When Mr. Lehr was a student at college, undersized as he was, he played foot-
ball; twice his nose had been broken in the game, and Mr. Lehr felt that football was an unduly rough game as played at the time and did not particularly encourage it at Ada. The rules of the game changed as the years passed, and with more interest in this and other sports, athletics were coming to be a part of college life at the Ohio Normal University.

Heretofore the students had shown little interest in athletics as a regular college activity, but with the expansion of the Departments of Engineering, Pharmacy and Law more young men came from the cities. These were accustomed to the physical equipment of city high schools; there was an increasing call for a gymnasium and an athletic field. It was quite impossible for the Faculty even to consider the erection of the gymnasium when the building accommodations were insufficient for the regular class recitations. The students, however, organized for track, and for football, and commenced to enter intercollegiate competition with nearby colleges.

A student of the nineties, who in later years was a nationally known football coach, in an address delivered some thirty years later at Homecoming, described the outdoor activities of the Ohio Normal University during the period when he was a student, as follows:

"Rugby football was not played at the Normal, but we did have an old association football which we kicked around the lot. We used to gather on a large field with a hedge at either end and choose sides, the idea being to kick the ball over the opponent's hedge. As many as a hundred players would sometimes take part in the game. Our games of course were nothing more than impromptu affairs; we had no rules at all." (F. H. Y.)

Mr. Lehr believed that the preeminent work and duty of a student while in school was to acquire knowledge. He also deemed the social contacts of a student and the friendships formed at college to be of the greatest value in the formation of character. He considered that all the activities of a student rightly directed would react favorably in the future, but in his mind nothing was done in the literary societies, so dear to his heart, could take the place of recitation in the classroom.

It was a matter of grave concern to him, too, that young men away from home, for the purpose of an education, should spend their funds for traveling about from one college to another over week-ends to play football and run the risk of neglecting their studies. There was another college president who shared this concern—Dr. Sylvester F. Scovel of Wooster College. Both of them were opposed to intercollegiate football; these two were the last presidents of Ohio colleges to oppose the growing emphasis upon intercollegiate athletics. But they could not stem the current. A new generation of young men and women were growing up who, not having had the pioneer experience of their fathers and mothers, and accustomed to being relieved of drudgery through modern inventions, sought an outlet for their youthful vigor in strenuous games. It thus became the duty of colleges to organize the athletic activities of students.
The change that was taking place in the general attitude of the public towards educational ideals and the obligations of educational institutions was but a reflection of the stand that was being taken by educators in regard to making requirements for academic degrees standard in all colleges.

As early as 1894 a bill was introduced in the State Legislature by Senator J. A. Garfield, acting together with President Canfield of the Ohio State University, prohibiting all institutions of learning from granting or conferring any degrees whatever unless they had an income of $15,000 a year either from the state or from a permanent endowment fund. The enactment of such a law would have prohibited not only the private Normal Schools from granting degrees but nearly all other colleges and universities of the state as well, since only a few of them had such an income at that time. About thirty colleges would have been compelled to become academies or close their doors, among them some institutions of prominence, such as Denison, Heidelberg, Otterbein, Athens, Wooster and Scio.

The President of the Ohio Normal University kept in close touch with the discussions of the bill in the Legislature. He also kept in active correspondence with the presidents of the other institutions affected to see what they planned to do. On the day the bill came up for a vote Mr. Lehr and a number of other college presidents were on hand to fight it. Mr. Lehr made a speech before the Legislature which he considered the best he had ever made. The night before, he had gathered together at a dinner,
CHAPTER SIXTEEN

NEW TRENDS IN EDUCATION

1894-1897

"Years ahead of its realization by others in this country Professor Lehr saw that it was necessary to make it possible for the common boy or girl to study what they wanted to study when they wanted to study it. Our old school was the leader in this idea. In other words it is but the simple truth to say that it has been the pioneer of democracy in education. There never has been any aristocracy at Ada except the aristocracy of brains."—FRANK B. WILLIS, formerly United States Senator from Ohio.

To the most critical it was readily apparent that Mr. Lehr had been successful in establishing an institution that embodied the educational ideals that had been formed in his heart and mind when a student at college.

First: The Ohio Normal University was co-educational.

Horace Mann had fought and won that battle years before, but in the sixties and early seventies there was still a question as to the wisdom of the co-education of the sexes.

Second: The Ohio Normal University was non-sectarian, yet in all its teachings God was revered. Mr. Lehr did not require that his teachers accept the same form of doctrine as he did, nor did he even require of his teachers that they be professing Christians, yet his influence in the institution was so strong and his belief in the inspiration of the Bible so profound that no teacher would have introduced destructive Bible criticism in the classroom.

Third: There were no rules for conduct. Every student was placed on his honor. This plan had succeeded beyond Mr. Lehr's expectations.

Fourth: Students could "enter at any period of the year and find classes to suit." The first catalogue had carried this statement, and during all the years that followed students with any ordinary degree of education or with no education at all came and were placed in classes suitable to their state of advancement. There were no academic requirements for admission.

Fifth: "School all the year round." School was in regular session forty-nine weeks of the year, with a schedule of from eighty to one hundred classes a day, each one having a fifty-five minute period, five days a week. Every major subject was presented each one of the five terms. A student could scarcely fail to find the classes he wanted at any period of the year.

Sixth: A summer term. This had been a regular feature
of the calendar year since 1871. As early as 1869 Mr. Lehr had conducted a summer term in the select school. In 1896—the period we are now describing—the Normal or summer term had an enrollment of 1042. The little town fairly swarmed with students. Hundreds came to be under Professor Park’s instruction in grammar and analysis. Equally attractive were the classes in teacher training and practical arithmetic under Professor Darst, and the large classes in geography and higher arithmetic under Professor Magliott. The classes in United States history under Professor Fess, and later under Professor Willis, often numbered three or four hundred. Other students came to “brush up” in physiology, orthography, penmanship, free hand drawing, rudimental music, elocution, while large numbers who were expecting to complete a course in the Arts Department came to “patch up” in advanced studies in that field. Many of the students in the special departments also were in attendance during the summer.

Seventh: Prices were at a minimum. At some of the other Normals, board could be secured at less cost, but nowhere was tuition less.

That his ideals had met with a hearty response was verified by the fact that the enrollment had increased year by year. In 1896 the number of different students in attendance throughout the year was 3,073; the enrollment by terms (total number paying tuition) was 5,093. It would seem to an onlooker that such an institution, self-sustaining as it had been from the start, could continue indefinitely; but Mr. Lehr and his associates were not deceived as to the outlook. The buildings were beginning to look shabby. Although every inch of available space was utilized for recitation rooms, the buildings could not accommodate the classes. Several of the departments had recited in rented rooms in various parts of the village for years. The laboratories were not as well equipped as those in endowed colleges; new and up-to-date equipment was needed.

The Faculty knew that many of the other colleges in the state long had looked upon the Ohio Normal University with critical eyes. Certain educators had declared it to be impracticable—impossible—to allow students to enter at any period of the year and to agree to provide classes to suit them. Others said the work done in the classroom at the Ohio Normal University was done too hurriedly to be well done, but they failed to reckon on the forty-nine-week year. It is true that the laboratories were very simply equipped, that the libraries were smaller than in the larger colleges, and that the buildings were becoming worn; but year by year hundreds, yes, thousands of students went forth from the doors of the Ohio Normal University to achieve success in various lines of endeavor. They seemed to know how to get things done.

However, not only in the Midwest but all over the United States, new standards in educational equipment were becoming universal. Although the proposed bill regarding standard endowment in colleges did not become a law at the time, yet it was evident that there would be such legislation in the not too distant future. The Faculty knew that they not only needed new buildings, but that they soon
must have an endowment. They were only too well aware that under the present status, the trustees as private owners could get no endowment. True, the school was chartered as a "university not for profit," but practically the trustees managed as though they owned it—yet they did not own any part as individuals. The matter was discussed from every angle; there seemed no possibility of securing financial aid.

Finally, Mr. Lehr thought of a plan. He had learned that among the various laws of the State of Ohio there was an obscure statute empowering the governor to appoint trustees of educational institutions. Mr. Lehr was on very friendly terms with the administration. The Republican party in Ohio had presented Asa S. Bushnell as a candidate for governor after Mr. Lehr had withdrawn his name in Mr. Bushnell's favor. Mr. Lehr accordingly discussed the matter with the Governor to see if action on these lines could be taken on behalf of the Ohio Normal University. He gave the Governor a full statement in regard to the income derived from the school and all other information required. The Governor was cordial and after studying the matter agreed to appoint the trustees and thus make the school a state school on the condition that there be no requests for money from the state for salaries or other expenses. It was, however, understood that after several years there would be an appeal for an appropriation for buildings.

Under this arrangement the Faculty would naturally assume some risk in the appointment of trustees by the state since the power of control would be handed over to others who could at any time vote out any of them. The trustees would also have power to reduce their salaries. However this seemed the only way to secure the needed financial aid, and Mr. Lehr had confidence that the trustees who would be appointed would act in fairness. The Governor's letter in regard to this matter is as follows:

"Columbus, Ohio.
June 30, 1897.

"President H. S. Lehr,
My Dear Professor:

Your esteemed favor of the 28th is received; also list of names of Trustees for your institution. I will fill the blanks left and make the appointments within a short time.

As I have within the past day or two appointed Hon. T. . . . B. . . ., a trustee of the C. . . . I. . . . Hospital, I will substitute Judge M. . . .'s name for his on the list if agreeable to you; and for one of the short term men I think I will appoint Mr. J. . . . R. . . ., an old friend of mine from F. . . ., and endeavor for the other two places to find suitable men at Cleveland and Cincinnati. If you have in mind any persons in those cities whom you would like to have appointed I should be glad if you would let me have their names. I will withhold making the appointments until I hear from you.

Now, allow me to thank you for your very cordial and kindly expressions in regard to myself. I assure you I appreciate your good words more than I can express, and assuring you of my best wishes for yourself person-
ally and for the success of the noble institution over which you preside, I remain with most cordial regards,
Very truly your friend,
ASA S. BUSHNELL."

The appointments of the trustees had thus been prepared, but before the Governor had an opportunity to sign
them he was called to southeastern Ohio to attend a meeting of a group of striking coal miners. Some newspaper re-
porters, while passing through the executive office, saw the commissions lying on a desk awaiting the Governor's sig-
nature. They lost no time in reporting the news, and the next morning the Cincinnati Enquirer and other papers
published an account of the matter and the names of the trustees.

When the citizens of Ada saw the morning papers, there was great excitement in the town since Mr. Lehr had
kept the matter entirely secret. In the evening the business men met in the public square and, headed by the University
band, marched to the University campus amid the most enthusiastic demonstrations of joy. A committee went
for Mr. Lehr, who at first refused to come as he felt restrained on account of the fact that the Governor had not
yet signed the commissions, but finally he was prevailed upon to go. "Speech, speech," called the crowd as he
approached. Under pressure from the townspeople he explained that the future of the school had been the anxious con-
cern of himself and the Faculty and that they had considered various plans for expansion, but to no avail. He ex-
pressed the belief that State Normals would probably be

established soon and become formidable competitors for a private Normal like the Ohio Normal University. He then
told briefly his hopes for the University and of his discus-
sion of the matter with the Governor.

Great applause followed his remarks; other speakers
were called for—among them Professor S. D. Fess, Profes-
sor Frank B. Willis, and Mr. Ralph Parlette—who gave
rousing addresses. A committee was appointed to express
to the Governor the sense of this meeting. There was much
cheering; the air resounded with the college yells; the
crowd sang "America" and dispersed.

It seemed too good to be true, and such proved to be the
case. Scarcely had the last cheer died away when one who
was closely connected with the Ohio Normal University
but who for personal reasons was secretly disaffected began
to write letters and otherwise use his energy to inflame, in-
stigate, and stir up the trustees of other Ohio colleges to
oppose the appointment of state trustees for the Ohio Nor-
mal University.

When the governor returned to Columbus after a short
absence, he found his office filled with the trustees of a
number of Ohio colleges objecting to his move. Mr. Lehr
got to see the Governor and found him very kind, but be-
because of the determined and combined hostility of the oth-
er colleges to this plan, he felt it would not be politic to
sign the commissions at the time; nor would he give the
name of the person who had aroused the colleges to ad-
verse action. Several years later at a dinner party in a neigh-
boring state, a trustee of an Ohio college told Mr. Lehr
who it was that had spoiled his plan. Said Mr. Lehr, "I might have known." Quoting from his "Reminiscences": "Nothing in all my life's history hurt me more than the miscarriage of this well-planned program. I believed that with the larger and better equipment which the state would have provided, the management of the University would have been so progressive and aggressive that it would have attracted the attention of educators, statesmen, and financiers all over the country. Great measures, resources, and plans were stored in the Founder's brain."

There are those whose lives are so dominated by fear and selfishness that they cannot comprehend that another could sacrifice and toil and even suffer for the sheer delight of serving, and for the love of men. Mr. Lehr had an indomitable spirit of sacrifice and toil, forgiveness and patience.

It was now thirty-one years — 1897—since Mr. Lehr, unknown and alone, had entered a little hamlet in the woods of northwestern Ohio to fulfill his cherished hope of founding a school after his own idea. It was almost twenty-six years since the erection of the Normal School building. In the generation that had passed, he had seen that school grow and develop from a small select school to a university of thirteen departments with an annual enrollment of over three thousand students. His students, now about thirty thousand strong, were filling positions of prominence and trust in every line, a large number of them with no further college training than that received under his supervision, though many had also gone to other universities for further work.

It was suggested by the former students and friends that "Founder's Day" be observed. As it was inconvenient to celebrate it on the actual date, it was decided to observe the day during the coming commencement week. A committee was appointed early in the year to arrange the program. No committee ever did better work; nothing was left undone to make the occasion a success. When the day finally came, the weather was ideal; the large tent which was secured for the occasion was filled to overflowing, and great crowds stood outside. The festivities and exercises occupied two days. Hundreds of former students came back to grasp again the hand of the man whose ingenuity and perseverance had made it possible for them to secure an education, to enter a profession, and to achieve success.

The program was an impressive one. Bishop Charles M. Fowler, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, gave the address of the occasion, delivering his celebrated lecture on Lincoln. The Ohio Normal University Choral Society rendered The Elijah, having secured as soloists former students who had delighted audiences of earlier days and who now had won distinction on the concert stage. There was a never-to-be-forgotten banquet, each speaker vying with the other to give greatest praise to Alma Mater.

On Founder's Day there were short addresses by the presidents of neighboring colleges and by other distinguished men and women who had come to do honor to the presi-
dent of this unique institution. Mr. O. T. Corson, State Commissioner of Schools of Ohio, made this pointed statement in his brief talk:

“Seldom do I hear a boy or girl from Ada growling about his position. The education gained here enables one to make the best of things, and instead of giving egotism, it gives self-confidence.”

Dr. Sylvester F. Scovel, President of the College of Wooster said:

“This occasion is a colossal compliment to President Lehr who was neither born great nor did he have greatness thrust upon him; but, far better, he achieved greatness. Napoleon said a great man is he who is able to do great things. We have in President Lehr that American pluck which makes him succeed whether others wish it or not.”

Pausing in his address he announced that the College of Wooster at its last commencement had conferred upon President Lehr the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with the understanding that it was not to be made public until this occasion. The audience went wild with enthusiasm. Three rousing cheers were given for Dr. Lehr and thousands of handkerchiefs were waved in the air. Dr. Scovel, in resuming his address, gave a brief summary of the development of education in the Northwest Territory.

Referring to the recent proposed legislation which threatened disaster to educational institutions with small endowments, he said,

“A certain distinguished college president in Ohio has said, ‘There are too many small colleges in the state. We should chloroform them and let them sleep their lives away.’ On the contrary, the varied population of Ohio demands a diffused system of educational policy, and anyone who raises his hand against this policy either is not informed or is an enemy of public education. Its history in the past dare not be disregarded, and from Germany’s great system one can draw the same analogy. It is not to be doubted that great aggregations of students in one place often make it a hotbed of evil, and hence it is better to avoid such aggregations.”

Dr. Lehr responded to these tributes to the school with a carefully prepared address. This was one of the few occasions when he appeared on the platform except to preside. Excerpts from his address follow:

“Since it has pleased my friends to celebrate the founding of this school, it may not be amiss to speak a few words of my early views of reforms needed in education and of the duties of educators. . . .

“At the age of twelve I started to school with the elementary spelling book. I had neither slate nor paper. There was no blackboard in the schoolroom. The method of instruction was pure individualism. With the exception of the spelling class that recited evenings and mornings, each pupil said his letters, spelled, read, and ciphered by himself. There were as many spelling and reading classes as pupils. The tyro recited, or in the language of that day said his letters, twice a day, and the remainder of the time was occupied in sitting on a
backless bench, and often with feet dangling in the air. The method of teaching reading was the most difficult that could be devised, yet millions, by this method, learned to read. At sixteen I began teaching; as I had been in school less than one year, my store of knowledge was extremely limited. I had read a small book called *Village Stories, Life of Daniel Boone, Robinson Crusoe*, the *History of the United States*, the *Testament*, and McGuffey’s *Second, Third, and Fourth Readers*. I had worked through Ray’s *Arithmetic* several times and had studied geography, grammar, and a little algebra.

“The lack of culture and the ignorance of the masses of the common people forty-five years ago can hardly be conceived by the present generation. About the middle of the Nineteenth Century individualism in education was merged into classification. Individualism had its advantages. The bit was not put upon the hard worker. Spartan-like, each pupil was expected to depend largely upon himself for his mental nourishment. But the days of individualism were numbered. Reading classes were formed; blackboards were introduced. I persuaded the directors of my first school to procure a blackboard. It cost $3, of which I paid $2, although earning but 56 cents a day. The organization of school into classes was a great innovation and met with much opposition.

“It was my ambition in my youth to assist in the construction of a new alphabet, which would have as many different characters as there are elementary sounds recognized in our language; to use my influence in adopting one weight, one measure for our country, and one circulating medium for the world; to organize a school where both sexes and all classes might receive an education, where one could enter at any time, select his own course of studies, remain as long as he desired, and re-enter when convenient, where little time would be wasted on non-essentials, and above all, I desired that this school should recognize God in all its teachings.

“My failures have been many and great. I have learned that large bodies move slowly and that reforms are accomplished when the world is ready for them. The English alphabet remains the same as it was forty-five years ago. The spelling of but few words has been abbreviated. The weights and measures in general remain the same in the United States, and no uniformity in the notation of the currencies of the world has been established.

“In the spring of 1866 I offered my services to a number of communities and tried to persuade them that if I were assisted financially I would be able to establish a school for the education of the masses, and for the training of teachers—a school where true merit would be recognized rather than wealth, but I found few persons who were inclined to pay any attention to my proposals. Four gentlemen of this village and vicinity listened carefully to my plans and were instrumental in my locating in this village. They were S. M. Johnson, William League, Abraham Ream, and Joseph Ream. I
supposed from my experience in teaching before the war, that students would flock to my school in larger numbers than they did, and that it would be an easy matter to get endowment for the school . . .

"It is the schoolmaster in this age who fits the parents for their responsible duties; he largely forms and models the preachers and lawmakers, and in turn fashions the new schoolmaster. How important that the best minds and purest hearts devote themselves to modeling the schoolteachers of this republic, and especially of Ohio, the modern mother of presidents, judges and great generals and great senators. The Ohio Normal University has undertaken to assist in this task; but she finds it enormous. She cries for help. She asks her alumni and the friends of education for one large commodious building to accommodate the thousands of students who flock to her portals every year . . ."

It will be observed that at the close of his address, Mr. Lehr made a strong, brave, direct appeal for financial help, for a building; but his call—the last he was ever to make publicly—was unheeded. The large audience was waiting to hear what Governor Bushnell, the next speaker, would say. It was just three weeks since the great jubilee meeting in Ada over the prospective state school project. Everyone hoped that the Governor would reconsider his decision not to sign the commissions and would announce it on this occasion. The excitement was tense as he arose to speak. He spoke eloquently, reviewing briefly the educational system of Ohio and congratulating the Alumni on the excellence of their Alma Mater, but not a word did he say about making the Ohio Normal University a state school. Amidst great applause and cheers he closed his address. The great day was over.

The Governor, who was a most gracious gentleman, was entertained at the Lehr home. In one of the halls he observed on the wall pictures of some of the governors who had been guests in this home. After his return to Columbus he sent to the family a large and handsomely framed portrait of himself. His letter in reply to theirs, expressing thanks, is as follows:

"Springfield, Ohio, July 31, 1897.

"President H. S. Lehr, Ada, O.

My dear President:

Allow me to thank you for your kind and cordial letter of the 26th, which was forwarded from Columbus and reached me yesterday.

I am glad to hear the photograph I sent you gave you and your family pleasure. I should have advised you that I was sending it, but wanted to take you by surprise. I shall consider it an honor to be placed in your 'gallery of Governors' and shall always remember my pleasant visit to your home and your kind hospitality, for which I again thank you.

Trusting you are all quite well and with kindest regards to your wife and daughters and best wishes for your health and happiness and success, I beg to remain,

Very truly your friend,

ASA S. BUSHNELL."
Mr. Lehr kept in touch with the Governor; their relations were friendly, but he could not prevail on him to appoint the state trustees.

It had been Mr. Lehr's fond hope that the unique plan of his Normal School would attract the attention of some man of wealth who would donate a building and perhaps other gifts to insure the permanency of the institution. It seemed to him to be incredible that an institution which sent out year after year hundreds of trained and successful young men and women into various fields of endeavor could escape the attention of the public. Could educators, especially, fail to note the satisfaction and warm loyalty of the students of the Ohio Normal University, even though its equipment was so meager? Could the methods and plans so successfully employed by the Ohio Normal University and other private Normals escape the notice of the truly great among educators?

When John D. Rockefeller in 1891 planned to pour the millions of Standard Oil into buildings along Chicago's Midway, he invited one of the most distinguished educators of all time to be the president of the great university he was to sponsor. This man of commanding intellect, Doctor William Rainey Harper, was given the privilege to conduct the University of Chicago according to any plan that he himself would devise. Mr. Thomas Wakefield Goodspeed, in his incomparable biography of Doctor Harper, quotes Dr. Harper as saying:

"On my way from Chicago (to meet the trustees of Chicago University) the whole thing outlined itself in my mind, and I have a plan which is at the same time unique and comprehensive, which I am persuaded will revolutionize university study in this country. It is very simple but thorough-going." ¹

What was this "unique plan" that Doctor Harper thought would revolutionize university study in America? Quoting from Doctor Harper's President's Report several years later, on "The System of Quarters":

"One of the original plans of the University is that of four quarters in the year, with work so arranged that a student may begin at the opening of any one of them and be given his degree at any one of four occasions yearly. This has proved an entire success, fully realizing all that was expected from it. It is a great convenience for students to be able to begin work at different periods in the year, and to arrange vacations according to special need. It is not at all difficult for the University to distribute instruction in such a way that almost any student will find his needs supplied in any quarter. The obvious benefits of the system have commended it to the attention of other institutions, and it has been adopted in one state university, in a prominent eastern university, and in some of the Normal Schools of another state." ²

Very cautiously the learned Doctor Harper, in speaking of the value of the short term unit mentions that "some

² The President's Report, July, 1892-1902, p. 9.
Normal Schools in another state" had used the system. Both the National Normal University at Lebanon and the Ohio Normal University at Ada had proved the value and adaptability of the short term unit for more than a quarter of a century. It may not be known with certainty how much Doctor Harper knew of the methods and ideals of the private Normal Schools of Ohio, but it is to be supposed that so profound a student of educational methods as he, could not have failed to observe the success of the Ohio Normal University, especially since he had had personal contact with at least two colleges in Ohio—Muskingum College at New Concord, and Denison College at Granville. From both of these localities students in considerable numbers came to Ada each year.

Regarding the introduction of the summer quarter at the University of Chicago, quoting again from Dr. Goodspeed:

"Few things so interesting or so extraordinary in results occurred in the early history of the University as the institution of the summer quarter. There was only one real summer quarter in any university—that of Chicago. Such a summer quarter was quite unknown, It was the great inspiration of President Harper's Educational Plan. From the first it was surprisingly successful."  

And again he says:

"The extraordinary success of the summer quarter  

was one of the great gratifications of President Harper's life. He never ceased to rejoice in it."

In 1897 the enrollment for the summer quarter of the University of Chicago was 1273; in 1900 the enrollment was 1674. At the Ohio Normal University the attendance for the Normal or summer term of 1897 was 1151, for 1900, 1210.

Mr. Lehr viewed the rise of the great University of Chicago which was moulding its greatness upon the foundation of the Normal School idea with mingled feelings—satisfaction to see the plan appreciated and adopted by the greatest educators of the period—disappointment that his own loved institution should not be able to reap some of the profit and fame.

4 Goodspeed, p. 143.
5 Report, p. cxxxvi.
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

THE DECLINE OF THE PRIVATE NORMALS

1897-1902

"April 9, 1866, H. S. Lehr began his noble career at Ada. The Civil War had closed, and a new era was opening for the young men and women of the United States.

"Mr. Lehr was full of the zeal of the new life. He had a great vision, the vitality to attempt its realization, and the sanity to keep himself and the institution he saw in vision, wisely poised.

"Where is there another man now alive, still in the range of his life work, who saw the first dawn of the idea of a great institution, who has seen it grow and multiply until today there is a full acre of students, ambitious, persistent, and heroic?

"For more than half of that half century I have known Mr. Lehr and have seen the triumph of his purpose, the fulfillment of his hope, and the achievement of his aspiration.

"That which has made Ada glorious above many other educational institutions is the fact that but for the special hope found here, but for the inspiration of those who had here learned the lesson of achievement, that but for the outstretched helping hand, many would never have taken the first step toward higher education and broader scholarship."—DR. A. E. WINSHIP, New England Journal of Education, June, 1916.

In 1898, the United States was at war with Spain. The war had little effect upon the student body, as few of them went to the front. The commandant, however, was called, his place being filled by one of the student officers. For the first time in the history of the department there was bitter disappointment and dissension over the decision of the judges at the annual Flag Contest. Otherwise the affairs of the Ohio Normal University continued at the usual pace. Nevertheless, the war, as wars have a way of doing, left many changes in its wake.

The attendance in every department at this time was larger than ever before. More rooms were rented about town to accommodate the various departments. The students did not seem to object to the inconvenience. Such a
happy, earnest assemblage of young people, nearly everyone hard-working and dependable!

An excerpt from a letter of a student of that period gives evidence that soliciting for members in the literary societies was still a major activity:

"During the first fall term of 1898 the Franklins won the soliciting contest by 88 to 48. The second fall term was also a very warm contest with a close score indeed, the Franklins, 132, the Philos, 134. During that contest the Philos were ably assisted by an indomitable solicitor who had returned from Washington, D. C. for the occasion. He had been on the ground two or three weeks prior to the close of the preceding term, and had made almost daily trips to Lima, or to some station east, in order that he might meet the new students that always filtered in a week or two before the beginning of the term.

"On one particular evening he came from Lima on the nine o'clock train having a Michigan student in tow. Immediately upon the stopping of the train both guardian and ward alighted, both satisfied apparently with the world. Just then the station policeman, known to all the solicitors of that day, swung back on the usual line-up of solicitors, striking this gentleman with one of his long arms. This so angered him that he left his protege in the care of his roommate and proceeded to take a 'fall-out' with the said official.

"While they were thus engaged it dawned upon me that I should do a little missionary work, so I quietly informed the new student that that was a bad crowd to be in, and that he had better come with me. . . . As he walked off with me the Franks raised a mighty cheer. I got his card the next morning before breakfast. The solicitor aforementioned, whom I had never met up to that time, came to me the next evening after the incident just related, and congratulated me as being the only person who had ever taken a student from him in the twenty-two terms he had been a solicitor at Ada."—

(H. A. C.)

The same enthusiasm pervaded every activity of the institution. "Class spirit" was intense between the various classes, seniors and juniors vying with each other in "roasts", parades, class yells, class songs. The Pharmacy Department and the Department of Engineering had again "buried the hatchet" with imposing ceremonies. From the viewpoint of interest, contentment, or satisfaction, so far as the student personnel of the Ohio Normal University was concerned, the present condition could presage only continued success.

At this time, however, a bill concerning the establishment of state Normals in Ohio came up in the Legislature; most of the educators of the state favored the bill. Through the efforts of Mr. Frank B. Willis, who was then in the House, the measure was defeated for the moment, but Mr. Willis knew, and the Faculty knew, that state Normals were long overdue in Ohio and would certainly become realities in the near future, and formidable competitors of the Ohio Normal University.
This year, too, saw the enactment of the Boxwell law. In its original form it provided that pupils of the country districts, who passed certain examinations, must be admitted to any high school in the county and that the school board of the district or township where such pupils resided was to pay the tuition of the successful applicants for four years. This law, providing as it did for the free high school education of the country youth at the expense of the district, was the first direct legislation to affect adversely the private Normals whose clientele had always been largely from the farms.

Heretofore, with little exception, the work of the students of the Ohio Normal University had been accepted at the higher institutions. Perhaps, occasionally, an entrance examination would be required; if so, the record made by the student in the test usually would be of such excellence that others from the Ohio Normal University seeking entrance in the same institution would be admitted readily. Now, however, not only in Ohio, but throughout the entire country, entrance requirements were tightening perceptibly. Legislation had been proposed that would make qualifications for admission to a higher institution depend not only on the merit of the student, but also upon the amount of endowment possessed by his Alma Mater, the value of the libraries, laboratories, and other equipment of the institution that had provided his education, and upon the academic degrees of his instructors.

The Faculty of the Ohio Normal University, along with all the other private Normals, viewed these developments as one views an approaching storm. Time and experience had demonstrated that a privately-owned institution would not be able to secure gifts or endowment. The buildings erected in 1871 and 1879 were shabby and antiquated. There was no prospect that now or at any time in the future there would be any help from village, township, state or from any individual. The combined life savings of the Faculty would have erected only a very modest building, and there still would have remained the problem of endowment and equipment.

Another consideration to be faced by the Faculty was that the thirty-year contract† with the village, entered into by Mr. Lehr on the erection of the large building in 1879, had just nine years more to run. That contract had been fulfilled thus far to the satisfaction of all concerned. Scores, even hundreds, of the youth of the village and district had profited educationally by the small investment made by their fathers; the donors and tax payers had had “value received” through increase in business. However, according to the contract, the land on which the building stood must revert to the school district after a period of thirty years. A new contract of some kind must then be made.

Thus for more reasons than one, the Faculty of the Ohio Normal University realized that changes of a grave character were impending. Mr. Lehr was very desirous of preserving the Ohio Normal University as an educational institution in order that the thousands of students who had passed through her portals might still have an Alma Mater.

† See Appendix A.
He was looking about, as were all of the private Normals which had been such valiant competitors of the Ohio Normal University, for a way out of an impossible situation.

A number of the private Normals that had been established in Ohio were already dead. Since the founding of the Teachers' Seminary at Kirtland, Ohio, in 1838, a number of these teacher training institutions had arisen from time to time. Some of them had been little more than a progressive teachers' institute. The period most productive of the development of the private Normals had been in the seventies and eighties.

The most formidable competitor of the Ohio Normal University, so far as enrollment was concerned, had always been the National Normal University at Lebanon, Ohio. Alfred Holbrook, because of advanced age, had resigned the presidency; his successor, though for the time meeting gratifying prosperity, was bravely facing the impending legislation which a few years later was to close the doors of that institution. The same was true of the private Normals in Indiana though conditions there differed slightly from those in Ohio.

The outlook, viewed from every angle, was now so grave that it was no longer considered a private matter by the Faculty. They discussed it fully among their friends and acquaintances. Publicity brought an unexpected turn in events.

The Central Ohio Conference of the Methodist Church was at that period the center of Methodism in the United States. Some of their most prominent ministers for years had looked with wondering eye upon the large number of their membership attending the Ohio Normal University rather than the Methodist colleges of the state. Naturally the Conference desired to nurture their communicants in their own faith; naturally, too, they desired to add to their membership. One of those who had been especially interested in this phase of the development of the Methodist Church now approached Mr. Lehr regarding the transfer of the good-will and property of the Ohio Normal University to the Central Ohio Conference.

After very prolonged discussion and careful consideration, the Faculty, realizing that the days of the private Normals were numbered, agreed to consider the proposition, as it appeared to offer the only solution to the perpetuity of the institution, though it was far from the ideal Mr. Lehr had hoped for. The proposition was first made sometime in 1898, but it was not until the autumn of 1900 that the transfer was actually made.

The Faculty at that time automatically dissolved as a body. Professor Park withdrew for a prolonged furlough; Professor Darst retired permanently; Professor Maglott remained as an instructor. Mr. Lehr had confidently hoped that the Conference would retain him as president. He believed that it would be very difficult for anyone else to conduct the institution during the period of transition; but above all he desired, with the increased equipment which the wealth of the Methodist Church could contribute, to be able to fulfill his dream of a school of five thous-

\[2\text{ See Appendix B.}\]
and students. He believed in the plan of the Ohio Normal University. He believed that even though the State of Ohio was preparing to provide facilities for the advanced education of the youth, there would be many, for years to come, who would welcome just such an opportunity as that afforded at the Ohio Normal University. He could foresee too that the various colleges, or departments as he called them, were destined to become more and more popular in the public mind. Then, too, there would always be those who desired to “patch up” a course. He believed that if he had even the barest amount of endowment to meet the legal requirements he could continue to make the Ohio Normal University a still greater success. Whether he, a product of the preceding generation, could have adjusted himself to the changing ideals and standards in education cannot be known. It was not to be granted to him to have this opportunity.

From the beginning of the transfer there was very much difference of opinion regarding details. Perhaps both contracting parties at times regretted the transaction and would have been glad to withdraw. There was confusion, too, among the laity of the church. When the Conference sent out agents to secure money for the endowment and for buildings, the first question asked was whether Mr. Lehr had joined the Methodist Church. The Methodists wanted their gifts to go to an institution that was Methodist in fact. Mr. Lehr had mistakenly supposed that his well-known reputation for fairness to all denominations and his generous attitude toward the various religious beliefs of his students and teachers would make it possible for him to remain as president. At the time the transfer was consumated, he had said to the Conference that he could easily “work with the Methodists.” But it soon became evident that if Mr. Lehr’s hopes for buildings and endowment for the Ohio Normal University were to be realized through the Methodist Church he must either relinquish the presidency or become a Methodist.

It would not have been difficult for him to do the latter as it had been his purpose in youth to enter that communion, his actual church affiliations having been decided by a mere accident—the ungracious conduct of a thoughtless Methodist minister. However, Mr. Lehr had toiled and sacrificed much for the church he had been associated with for more than forty years and he could not—would not—now withdraw from that church for any gain, bitter as it might be to relinquish his position in the institution he had founded and so greatly loved.

In his misapprehension as to his ability to “work with” a religious sect other than his own, he had an illustrious predecessor in the person of Horace Mann. That distinguished educator, on accepting the presidency of Antioch College in 1854, said to the trustees of the college that he was “non-sectarian” as well as they. He was soon to learn through great sorrow of heart that his interpretation of non-sectarianism and theirs differed so greatly that they could not work together satisfactorily.

In 1900, therefore, Mr. Lehr resigned as President of the Ohio Normal University. He had had many failings but he had been a great man who worked for the progress of humanity.
Ohio Normal University and accepted the vice presidency, though he still actually conducted the affairs of the institution so far as educational matters were concerned. The new president, Leroy A. Belt, M. A., D. D., was selected by the trustees with a view to his ability to collect the funds which were so imperatively needed. He seemed to be well adapted for that purpose, for within a short time he was able to erect two buildings, one for classrooms and the other for an auditorium.

It was unfortunate that the new president and Mr. Lehr in their personal relationships found themselves unable to work together. The magnanimity and forbearance that had been so dominant in Mr. Lehr's life and character heretofore seemed now to have deserted him. There were bitter misunderstandings. The two men used different vocabularies and seemed unable to understand each other even in simple statements.

After two trying years, painful to Mr. Lehr, to the new president, and to the Conference, Mr. Lehr resigned as vice-president and thus severed all connection with the institution. During his last term—the summer term of 1902—the enrollment was larger than ever before. Unfortunately exact data are not available, but the attendance reached nearly 1,500.

As special lecturers for that term, besides the regular corps of teachers, he secured a number of distinguished educators. Among them were Dr. A. E. Winship, Editor of

* A few years later he was honored with the title of President Emeritus.

the New England Journal of Education; Dr. Charles F. Thwing, President of Western Reserve University; Dr. W. B. Thompson, President of Ohio State University; Dr. N. R. Schaeffer, Superintendent of Public Instruction of Pennsylvania; Dr. O. T. Corson, Editor Ohio Educational Monthly; Dr. Clara L. Myers, and others of like distinction in the field of education.

The address to the Class of 1902—the date of Mr. Lehr's retirement—was delivered by Dr. John Wesley Hill of New York. Before a large audience he said farewell on behalf of the Alumni to the retiring president. The words rang out in his golden voice with singular tenderness:

"We love you; and as you are now about to retire from the presidency of our Alma Mater, know, venerable sir, that your life through our lives, has been multiplied and absorbed by all the trades and professions, and that while you continue to tabernacle here amidst the scenes of your high achievements, your spirit is marching abroad, the inspiration of teacher and toiler, politician and physician, merchant and missionary, philanthropist and preacher, and all these with their children and children's children unite in weaving a chaplet of praise as your appropriate crown, and building their achievements into a pyramid as a monument for the reflection of your glory."

Two years after Mr. Lehr's resignation, Dr. Belt retired as president. In his place the trustees selected Rev. Albert Edwin Smith, D. D., Ph. D., who served in that capacity—and served well—for twenty-five years. He took up the
serious problems that faced the Ohio Normal University—the need for an endowment of several hundred thousand dollars and more and better buildings, adequately equipped. The older Methodist colleges naturally had the preference in the hearts of members of the church. Most of the men of wealth had already pledged gifts to the other Methodist colleges of Ohio.

Besides these heavy financial burdens, the new management found itself in deep waters in attempting to continue Mr. Lehr's unique plan without his personality, wisdom, and experience. The former clientele of the institution demanded vigorously the popular plans and methods of the Ohio Normal University. It had not become clearly defined in the public mind that in order to meet the legal requirements of standardization in educational institutions it would be necessary for the University to make many adjustments; nor was it yet clear to the former clientele that the standardization of the Ohio Normal University was very much complicated by its large number of departments or colleges, each of which must now fulfill the requirements of the "credit system." Therefore a very, very large endowment would be necessary if the institution were to be conducted according to former methods.

If the former students were displeased at the change—the village of Ada was in consternation. Thus the period of transition was very difficult for all concerned. Gradually new ideas and methods were acquired along lines necessary to meet the requirements determined upon by the colleges. The name of the institution was changed, the word "Normal" being dropped and "Northern" substituted in its place. Thus again the school at Ada changed its name and was henceforth to be known as Ohio Northern University.

Had it been possible to create a method of standardization in education that would have taken into consideration the achievement of students after graduation in their respective vocations, without doubt the Ohio Northern University even as a private Normal, because of the long roster of distinguished alumni, could have been on the accredited list. However, such a standard of measurement in education would not have been practicable then or at any time.

The struggle (which continues to the present moment) of the new management of the Ohio Northern University to secure endowment, buildings, equipment and recognition as an accredited institution under the new system of standardization as agreed upon by the educators, is worthy of record in the annals of educational history. However, the story of their achievements, worthy though it be of record, is not a part of this narrative, excepting for brief mention.

Throughout the Midwest by 1908 the private Normals with possibly one or two exceptions in Indiana had either closed their doors or had merged with other institutions with the result that there was a change in their methods and ideals. They had met the need of a pioneer period and, with state provision for the advanced education of the youth of the country districts as well as those of the city, many of the peculiar advantages of the private Normals were no longer in great demand, especially so, since Nor-
mal School ideals had already influenced nearly every college in the land. Those who had the privilege of attending the "Normals" will never forget the warmth, and friendliness, and genuine fellowship of their instructors, who were chosen not only for their academic degrees but more especially for their ability to impart the knowledge they possessed with such animation as to inspire in the student passion for study, for work, for service. The equipment of the private Normals may have been meager, but the experiences of the student there, under conditions approximating those of pioneers in other lines of endeavor, were wholesome and built character.

Mr. Lehr was sixty-four years old when he retired from the Ohio Normal University. He lived more than twenty years thereafter, departing this life on January 23, 1923. Surrounded by his friends, his family, and his books, he lived a private life. Always a careful student of history and political economy, he kept in close contact with the affairs of the nation and state, through constantly being in touch with former students in public life who sought his counsel on countless occasions.

His declining years were cheered by frequent visits from former students and friends who came to thank him again for the opportunity he had given them for an education, for the spirit of service and self-sacrifice they had imbibed from him, and not the least, for the reverence for God and His Word that he had instilled in them. To the end of his life he continued to receive letters of thanks for service rendered, for friendly counsel, for financial aid, for Christian testimony. It has been given to few men to realize the gratitude of thousands of men and women in such measure as did the Founder of the Ohio Northern University.

He lived to see a memorial auditorium erected in his honor by former students and friends. On a stained glass window in the Memorial Hall there is inwrought a life-sized portrait of this man who served his generation so faithfully. Underneath it are these words:

"In Honor of the Founder, Dr. Henry S. Lehr. Patriot, Soldier, Renowned Educator and Distinguished Citizen. His Work was the Enrichment of many Lives, his Fame is with the Ages."
CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

OHIO NORTHERN UNIVERSITY
1900 TO DATE (1937)

"Weep not that the world changes—did it keep
A stable, changeless course, 'twere cause to weep."
—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

It was the intention of the author to close this narrative with the preceding chapter, but "what happened next" deserves in all fairness more mention than was given it in the preceding chapter.

When the Faculty of the Ohio Normal University transferred their property to the Central Ohio Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they "conveyed and sold to the proper officials of the Conference all the property, personal and real, pertaining and belonging to the trustees of the Ohio Normal University held in trust by them as the property of the University, the trustees appointed or elected by the church, to carry out the contracts of the trustees now in force."

The largest item in the transfer—the "good will" of the Faculty—was unmentioned in the contract. The practical and thorough methods, the kindly interest of the professors, and the general worthiness of the old Normal were to produce a momentum that for more than a generation was to influence the growth and development of the University under a new management and under very different conditions.

Following Dr. Lehr's retirement, and even before, Dr. Belt, with indefatigable energy, set about collecting funds for the buildings which were now imperative. With the prospect of erecting a new building, the problem immediately arose as to where to place the building. The Faculty could transfer only the property it owned—the old Normal building, erected in 1871, the ground on which it was situated, and an acre and a half, more or less, to the south of it. The building erected in 1879 by the Union School District, the ground beneath it, and probably an acre to the north of it, belonged to the Union School District; by the terms of the contract of 1879,¹ this property was merely leased to the Faculty by the District for a period of thirty years. Many of the citizens of the town were not well disposed towards the action of the Faculty in selling their portion of the campus and their buildings to the Methodist Conference. They had always been deeply interested in the school and they wanted it to continue as it was; they feared that the new management would make many changes which would be displeasing to the village. Therefore

¹ See Appendix A.
was a great deal of discussion, both friendly and otherwise. Some of the citizens said:

"We will not convey to the Conference the building and grounds belonging to the Union School District; we will start a school of our own there and conduct it as we like."

Others said:

"If we do convey it, the new management must continue 'The Thirty Year Contract' regarding free tuition in perpetuity."

The Board of Education, having carefully considered the matter, came to the conclusion that it had no right to take any step in the matter without the consent of the people. The Board therefore called for a vote to be taken August 24, 1901. If the citizens would endorse the transfer on the condition that the new management would make the free tuition clause perpetual, then the Board would regard it as the will of the people and act accordingly.

The new management hesitated as to their decision. Should the new trustees purchase a large campus in another part of the village and forget the acreage belonging to the Union School district, or should they pursue some entirely different course? The problems involved in providing adequate buildings, equipment, endowment and other needs proved to be greater than they had realized at the time of the purchase. Some of the new trustees, perplexed by the unfriendly attitude of the citizens and students, and by the variety of the educational problems to be solved because of the numerous departments or colleges, suggest-
ed that they use only the grounds and buildings purchased from the Faculty and reduce the Ohio Normal University to the status of an academy and thus make it merely a feeder to the Methodist Colleges already in existence in Ohio.

On the evening of August 23, there was a mass meeting of the citizens to discuss the situation. Speeches were made by some of the professors and by various citizens. Mr. Lehr found himself in a very difficult position, as the people were distraught. He carefully discussed the situation from every angle. He tried to make the audience understand why the Faculty had made the transfer; he explained that it would have been impossible for the Ohio Normal University to continue more than a few years longer on the old basis. He explained the difficulties that could arise if the citizens refused to convey to the Conference a deed for the buildings and land belonging to the Union School District. Sentiment, excepting among those who already understood the significance of the proposed legislation regarding standardization of educational requirements, was against him. The atmosphere about the town was tense with subdued excitement; many people feared to express themselves in the matter, not knowing what the eventuality would be.

The vote was taken the next day, and stood 41 against and 540 in favor of the District conveying a deed of transfer to the new management on the condition that the clause granting free tuition to the pupils who were eligible should be preserved inviolable. The Board of Education then exe-
cuted a deed transferring to the Conference the property belonging to the Union School District. The consideration was one dollar, which was handed to the president of the School Board, Mr. Agnew Welsh, by Dr. Belt.

Within a very short time through the efforts of the latter a new building—Brown Auditorium—was erected on the northeast corner of the campus. Closely following that, a large building for classrooms—Dukes Memorial—was erected on the south side of the campus.

Because of these two new buildings, it was at once imperative to provide a new field for military drill. For this purpose Dr. Belt purchased a part of the old Fair Grounds to the southeast of the village. Thus, in the matter of securing donations and gifts for the Ohio Normal University, he proved to be a very ardent and efficient promoter. It was during his incumbency, too, that the name of the school was changed from Ohio Normal University to Ohio Northern University. The word “Normal” was discontinued as it no longer seemed appropriate in view of the changing character of the institution.

Dr. Belt did not profess to be an educator, he was rather a business-like clergyman, who had conducted the financial affairs of the Central Ohio Conference with acumen. The burden of the management of a large university rested heavily upon him and after four years he resigned because of failing health.

Following Dr. Belt’s retirement the Conference appointed Reverend Albert Edwin Smith, D. D., Ph. D., as his successor. It was at this time, too, that Dr. Lehr was honored with the title “President Emeritus.”

Dr. Smith, a “self-made” man, was a clergyman who had achieved unusual prominence in the Conference, not only as a pastor but as a public speaker. He was known for his devotion to the ministry and to all the various problems pertaining to the church. The Conference therefore had selected him as the man most likely to succeed in their latest venture in education—the acquisition, not of a college of Liberal Arts only, as were most religious institutions of learning, but of a University that had under its supervision flourishing and well-appointed colleges in Pharmacy, Engineering, Law, and other colleges not so well equipped but equally flourishing.

Inasmuch as Dr. Smith had not made a specific study of modern educational conditions, it was no small undertaking for him to assume the burden of the momentous problems facing him from the moment he accepted the presidency. Fortunately for him the period was one of great financial prosperity.

To examine his program of expansion step by step would be interesting but not feasible for this volume. Only a brief summary of his prowess as a builder can be recorded. With the zeal of a crusader he set forth to secure an adequate endowment—and secured it.

One of his first acts of expansion was to purchase a small church and several lots southwest of the campus. This building he reconditioned for the College of Music. Later when no longer needed for that purpose the building was
again remodeled, this time for the Department of Biology, with a small greenhouse and garden for botanical study on the grounds adjoining.

To provide a larger drill field for the Military Department he added several acres to the grounds already purchased for that purpose.

A College of Agriculture seemed pressing at that period. For that purpose he secured ninety acres just west of the village. After several years of experiment, this college was found to be impractical because of the expense connected with it, and was discontinued. The grounds were converted into an athletic field, with a baseball diamond, a football field, running track and tennis courts.

Very soon after Dr. Smith became president he began to form plans for the erection of a large building as a memorial to the Founder. Not until 1914 however, was he able to put these plans in execution. The question arose as to the best location for this building. Land adjoining the campus, being closely built up with dwellings, was expensive. It was finally decided to use the site of the old Normal building which was now antiquated and beyond repair. This building was therefore razed and the Lehr Memorial was placed where it stood. Thus, the first building which had been secured with so much rejoicing and also with so many misunderstandings and difficulties was removed from the campus. To provide still further space for the Lehr Memorial the Pharmacy building, erected in 1894, was moved to the northwest corner of the campus and placed on a

strong and durable foundation with the ground floor equipped as a chemical laboratory.

During the construction of the Lehr Memorial, the building erected by the District in 1879 caught fire and burned to the walls; the third floor, where the library halls with their large libraries, statuary, and paintings were located was entirely destroyed. This building was then fully remodeled as a two-story building for classrooms, and was known as the John Wesley Hill, Sr., building as a memorial to the father of Dr. John Wesley Hill, who had been instrumental in securing many of the large gifts that were coming to the University from the Methodist Church.

To afford better and more suitable arrangements for classrooms, Dukes Memorial also at this time was reconditioned at a cost of $18,000.

In 1922 a central plant for heating and lighting the University buildings was installed in a building modern in every detail, situated just to the rear of the Hill building. Included in the building was a large laboratory for the students of Electrical Engineering.

In 1923 grounds adjoining the University on the north were purchased and a building was erected for the sole use of the College of Law.

As Dr. Smith's period of service began to draw to a close he pressed his building program still more diligently. At great cost he purchased grounds west of the campus for the erection of a building to be used by the College of Music — Presser Hall. At the same time the John H. Taft gymnasium, splendidly equipped and modern in every re-
spect, was being erected on the athletic field. Both build-
ing were completed before he retired.

Any college president could be proud of such a program of expansion, successfully completed. The buildings, plain
in architecture but substantial, stand as mute witnesses to
the thought, effort and zeal of the builder. They tell the
story better than can be expressed in words.

It should be noted that after the fire which destroyed
the literary halls, the societies were given small halls in the
reconstructed building. Interest in the literary societies had
been declining for some time, even before the fire, but now
the impetus for competition was still further lessened. The
students of this period were not so greatly interested in
public speaking before large audiences, as those of the pre-
ceding generation. Within a few years after the fire, the so-
cieties, by common consent, ceased to assemble. This was
due to more reasons than one. Many of the students now
went home over the week end, and Friday evenings were
no longer advantageous for public gatherings. Literary ac-
tivities were now taken care of by debating societies, dra-
matic clubs, and small literary groups in the various col-
leges. The opportunity for speaking before large audiences
was no longer a feature of the University by choice of the
student body.

Following the World War interest in military activities
declined. This department had previously been one of the
most important as providing a special field of interest to
ten students. Interest in it was now displaced in favor of
athletics. The War Department, accordingly, discontinued
their allocation of funds and personnel, and the department
disbanded.

The attendance during Dr. Smith’s incumbency aver-
gaged from nine to eleven hundred excepting during the
World War. At that time there was a serious decrease in
numbers. Later, the attendance returned to the pre-war
level and even passed it.

Dr. Smith was necessarily absent from the village and
school much of the time during his term of service in order
to secure the gifts and donations that were so greatly need-
ed; therefore he did not have much personal contact with the
students. Nevertheless, the tone of the social life and of all
the activities of the University during his incumbency,
bores the impress of his unfaltering rectitude and was dom-
ninantly Christian. Dr. Smith, though having faced many
perplexities and painful misunderstandings, could look
back with satisfaction over his twenty-five years of service
as President of Ohio Northern.

When Dr. Smith was retired by the Conference in 1929,
the Board of Trustees of this district elected Robert Wil-
liams, M. A., D. D., L.L. D., a scholar, an educator, and
an eminent speaker, as Dr. Smith’s successor.

There is no one who does not know of the great depres-

tion that occurred in 1929. The stocks and bonds that had
seemed as firm as Gibraltar became as shifting sands. Land
that had been a valuable asset became a liability. The en-
donement that had been raised for Ohio Northern, which
had seemed ample and secure, dwindled and shrank.
Many of those who had promised gifts and donations for
the buildings which had been so splendidly and hopefully erected could not pay them no matter how great their desire to do so.

Upon the shoulders of Dr. Williams fell the burden of apparently irreparable losses. The University was heavily in debt because of its building program. The first problem, therefore, of the incoming administration was the funding of the indebtedness, through securing loans for this purpose. Through the willingness of various financial institutions this was accomplished. Banks were more than willing to extend credit and at the time of writing (December, 1937) the loans have been reduced by approximately one third of the original sum. To care for the remaining indebtedness, a first mortgage bond issue is now being floated and it is hoped that friends and graduates of the institution will purchase these securities.

The second problem that faced Dr. Williams was the reduction of expenditures to the point where income and outgo balanced. Deficits had been accruing, and in 1929 presented a serious menace to the future existence of the University. Accordingly, it became necessary to reorganize the entire institution. This was a painful process and resulted in a sharp curtailment of the administrative and teaching staff. With the utmost care and precision Dr. Williams analyzed the financial condition of the University, and under baffling circumstances became master of the situation. Retrenchment was necessary on every side. In this he was aided by as fine and generous and brave a corps of instructors as any University ever had; each one of them, not for one year only but for a period of years relinquished a portion of his salary in order that the University might operate on a balanced budget.

Dr. Williams deserves commendation for his efficient handling of this situation. He says:

"We are glad to report that after seven years, deficits are very small indeed and of infrequent occurrence. It is all important that a non-profit making institution should refrain from borrowing money and under no condition should its permanent funds be impaired by borrowing, for almost always it involves the selling of securities at reduced prices, particularly in times of depression such as we have passed through."

Dr. Williams was a scholar—an educator—and as such the educational authorities whose duty it was to inspect the various colleges and universities viewed him. In years past, they had been lenient in regard to requiring higher academic standards at Northern, as they could see the determined and well-directed efforts of Dr. Smith to fulfill their requirements in the matter of buildings, equipment and endowment. Now, however, they demanded a higher academic standard for entrance. In this Dr. Williams heartily concurred. Partly as a result of this and also because of the business depression which set in soon after Dr. Williams came to Northern, there was a decrease in attendance. In order to make each separate college meet standard requirements with the limited funds at hand, Dr. Williams found it advisable to merge several of the departments or colleges into one, and to discontinue others. This did not
meet with the approval of all of his advisers. However, it seemed to him the only way out at the time.

That this policy is being justified is seen by the now unquestioned acceptance of graduates of Ohio Northern by other universities, its full accrediting by educational boards that heretofore had looked with some doubt upon the quality of work being done, by the increasingly wider demand for teachers from the University,—and by general recognition that the improved faculty preparation, the more compact curriculum, the emphasis on practical, vocational and professional subjects, is in line with modern trends in education. It is gratifying to note that the higher standards for admission and graduation are not mitigating against the growth of the student body, following the clearing up of the great depression.

Oblied as he was to cut running expenses to the minimum, Dr. Williams, a stranger to the town and its traditions, viewed askance the large number of students who enrolled from the Union School District in the Liberal Arts College. Sometimes as many as a hundred or a hundred and fifty students from the District were receiving free tuition in that college. The tuition fee for non-resident students, which in 1879 had been so small, and even up to the time of Dr. Lehr’s retirement was but thirty-three dollars for forty-nine weeks if paid in advance, had now increased very considerably. The cost to the University of providing free education to the students of the district had become an important item in the annual budget.

Dr. Smith had chafed under these conditions, and had taken the matter under advisement, but had not felt that the time had come to ask for a change. However, more than fifty years had now elapsed since the first contract had been entered into with the Union School District. The building which they had erected had long ago become worn and out of date; after the fire of 1914 it had been entirely remodeled at no cost to the citizens. Hundreds of pupils from the District had received free tuition; in fact, almost two generations had profited by the contract. The tax levy for the construction of the building had long since expired.

In view of the financial condition in which the University found itself, Dr. Williams having studied the situation very carefully, now felt justified in demanding that the students from the District should pay certain fees, the tuition itself still to be free according to the contract as renewed by Dr. Leroy A. Belt and the citizens of the Union School District. This action on his part was hotly contested, legally and otherwise, by the citizens as might well be expected. However, he remained adamant on the subject and the students of the District have since been obliged to pay a fee on entrance each term.

One effect of the long period of financial depression, was to limit Dr. Williams’ program of expansion. Shortly after becoming president of the University, he arranged for the purchase of a home for Freshmen girls, the building secured being the residence built in 1889 by Dr. Lehr for

\[2\text{ Cf. p. 118.}\]
his family, and as such, formerly the scene of many interesting events in the history of the University.

His administration, at this time, also furnished a spacious room in the Lehr Memorial as a social center and reception room for women students, Alumnae Hall, which met a need of long standing. The Library, which had previously occupied this large hall was now moved to Brown Memorial, a building which had served first as an auditorium and later as a gymnasium. He also purchased and remodeled with modern equipment a factory building in Ada for a workshop and laboratory for the College of Engineering. An infirmary and a dispensary, have also recently been added to the facilities of the University.

Thus, in spite of the long period of depression substantial progress has been made in placing the University on a sound academic and business footing. Debts have been steadily reduced; over $100,000.00 have been raised for endowment and current expenses; buildings have been renovated; thousands of volumes have been added to the general library and to that of the College of Law. Departmental equipment has been signaliy augmented, and in general the entire University is better than ever equipped for its task,—that of carrying on into a new day the educating of young men and women so that they may take their places in the intellectual, social, and moral leadership so urgently needed in our day.

With unwavering persistence Dr. Williams has continued his policy of maintaining in Northern a high standard of scholarship. The equipment in all departments, while not as abundant as in larger universities, meets the needs of the curricula.

The web of time is woven slowly. The buildings which Dr. Lehr so greatly desired and for which he so earnestly strove, stand on the campus as though in answer to his heart cry; they came a generation too late for the Founder’s use, and even Dr. Smith, the builder, was obliged to see his successor rather than himself enjoy the benefit of his labors. True it is that “one sows, and another reaps.” Each generation in turn prepares a way for the one that follows.

As in the days of the old “Normal,” the little village of Ada still throngs with students—a splendid group of young men and women, alert, vigorous, and in earnest about getting an education. The streets of the village resound with their strong, firm step, the roads are crowded with their cars, the classrooms and campus vibrate as of old with the glory and optimism of youth.
APPENDIX A

CONTRACT BETWEEN ADA UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
AND NORTHWESTERN OHIO NORMAL SCHOOL

Article of agreement entered into this 30th day of April, A. D. 1878, between H. S. Lehr, John G. Park, George W. Rutledge and Frederick Maglott, Faculty of the Northwestern Ohio Normal School, Ada, Ohio, and the Board of Education of the Ada Union School District, Ada, Hardin County, Ohio, witnesseth:

1st. The said H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, Geo. W. Rutledge and Frederick Maglott for consideration hereinafter mentioned do hereby agree to convey in fee simple by deed of general warranty on or before the 1st day of June, A. D., 1878, to the Board of Education of the Union School District, the following described premises situated in the Village of Ada, County of Hardin, and State of Ohio, to wit:

Commencing at a point at the intersection of Main street and Peach avenue in said village, then south two hundred and thirty-two feet, thence west three hundred and sixty-three feet, thence north two hundred and thirty-two feet, thence east three hundred and sixty-three feet to the place of beginning containing $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land more or less.

2nd. The Board of Education of said Ada Union School District, for consideration agrees to pay the said H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, George W. Rutledge, and Frederick Maglott on or before the 1st day of June, A. D., 1878, the sum of two thousand dollars the purchase money for said premises.

3rd. The Board of Education of said district further agrees to erect upon said premises, upon a site to be mutually agreed upon by said parties, a school building to cost not to exceed sixteen thousand dollars ($16,000), the plans and specifications of which, together with proper heating apparatus, furniture and seating to be mutually agreed upon between said parties, and to expend not to exceed the sum of five hundred dollars ($500) in addition to the above amount for the improvement of the grounds, fences and walks on said premises and to expend a farther sum of not less than fifteen hundred dollars ($1,500) for philosophical, physiological, astronomical and other necessary apparatus for the use of said school, the amount and kind of which to be mutually agreed upon by said parties and to complete and furnish the same ready for occupancy on or before the first day of August, A. D., 1879, and lease said premises to said H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, George W. Rutledge, and Frederick Maglott for the period of thirty (30) years from the first day of August, A. D., 1879, for school and literary purposes only.

4th. The said H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, George W. Rutledge and Frederick Maglott owners and proprietors of the said Northwestern Ohio Normal School for consideration
of the use and occupancy of said premises and building agree to teach free of tuition for a term of thirty years from the 1st day of August, A. D., 1879, all the school youth within the present limits of the district now known as the Ada Union School District after said youth shall have passed the following grades in the Union schools of said district and have finished what are ordinarily known as the common branches of education, viz., orthography and spelling, higher arithmetic to percentage, descriptive geography, English grammar, analysis, arithmetic in all its forms and names with the exception of higher arithmetic to percentage above mentioned, English reading, elocution and penmanship and all youth of said district having finished said studies shall be admitted as students to the said Northwestern Ohio Normal School, after being first examined as to their proficiency in the above named studies by a committee of three to be comprised as follows: one person to be selected by said H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, George W. Rutledge, and Frederick Maglott, one member of the Board of Education of said district and the superintendent or a teacher in the highest department in the Union schools of said district, and all scholars passing a grade of at least seventy percent of one hundred in all of the above named studies except penmanship (which shall not be included in said examinations) shall be admitted to said Normal School and all scholars failing in one or more of said branches, shall be re-examined by said committee within three months from the time of the annual examination upon the branches only upon which he or she may have failed, and if then passing the grade above mentioned, shall be admitted to said Normal School, said examinations to be held yearly and shall be held on the last week of the last term of each school year and shall be open to all the youth of said district, and no school youth shall enter said Normal School unless he or she shall have passed the said grade, whether they are scholars in said Union schools or not, and the said H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, George W. Rutledge, and Frederick Maglott agree to take the school youth of said district, after they have passed the grade above mentioned and admit them free of tuition to the following studies: Bookkeeping, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, surveying, analytical geometry, physics, astronomy, natural philosophy, political economy, moral and mental philosophy, history U. S. and general rhetoric, zoology and all the natural sciences, higher mathematics and the ancient languages known as the classics, as may appear from year to year in the published curriculum of said Normal School, and to teach free from tuition any study taught in said school whenever a class in such study shall be organized; but the above is in no wise to be so construed as to include the ordinary branches of the common schools heretofore mentioned, vocal and instrumental music, instruction in drawing, painting, architecture, sculpture, and whatever pertains to such a department, and said H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, George W. Rutledge and Frederick Maglott shall have the general supervision of the school youth so admitted to said Normal School, granting to them the same general privileges afforded to the other
students in said school and govern them by the same general rules as other students in said school are governed, providing always that no scholar so admitted shall be expelled from said Normal School without the consent of the Board of Education of said Union school and district, and the said H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, George W. Rutledge and Frederick Maglott reserve the right to divide the youth so admitted between or among the several literary societies even if the other students be not so divided.

And the said H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, George W. Rutledge, and Frederick Maglott agree further that they will not conduct (or teach in) any other college, seminary, Normal or other school (except free school) for a period of thirty years within a radius of two hundred miles, or will not teach in any free or Union school within the same radius for a period of five years from the 1st day of August, 1879.

And the said H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, George W. Rutledge and Frederick Maglott further agree before taking possession of said premises to enter into a written lease for the period of thirty years for said premises from August 1st, 1879, said lease to contain the same general stipulations herein contained and which shall further stipulate that said lessees shall take good care of said building and not misuse the same, make all ordinary repairs, not including repairs of foundation, walls or roof and matters of like nature, and quietly yield possession thereof at the end of said lease.

And it is further agreed by said H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, George W. Rutledge, and Frederick Maglott that if default be made in any of the stipulations and provisions herein contained on their part to be kept that they will forfeit and pay to the Board of Education of the Ada Union School District or their successors, the sum of four thousand dollars, and to secure the payment of said sum they agree to forthwith execute and deliver to the Board of Education aforesaid a mortgage deed for the following described premises, situated in said village of Ada, county of Hardin, State of Ohio, as follows, to wit: Commencing at a point one hundred and thirty-five feet south of the northeast corner of the southeast quarter of section twenty-one (21) township three (3) south, range nine east, thence west three hundred and sixty-three feet, thence north to a point two hundred and thirty-two feet south to the center of Peach avenue in said village, thence east three hundred and sixty-three feet, thence south along Main street to the place of beginning.

And it is further agreed that should the last above described premises not be sufficient to liquidate the sum of four thousand dollars above mentioned in case of forfeiture, no other property belonging to said H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, George W. Rutledge, and Frederick Maglott shall be held liable therefor.

In witness whereof the said H. S. Lehr, J. G. Park, George W. Rutledge, and Frederick Maglott, and the said Board of Education of said Ada Union School District by resolution as passed by John P. Cochran, its president, and
John H. Smick, its clerk, have hereunto set their hands and seals this 30th day of April, A. D., 1878.

H. S. LEHR, (Seal)
J. G. PARK, (Seal)
FREDERICK MAGLOTT, (Seal)
GEORGE W. RUTLEDGE, (Seal)

The Board of Education of Ada Union School,
Ada, Ohio.

By JOHN P. COCHRAN, (Seal)
President of the Board of Education of Ada Union School, Ada, Ohio.

By JOHN H. SCHMICK, (Seal)
Clerk of the Board of Education of Ada Union School, Ada, Ohio.
APPENDIX B

Condensed from an article appearing in the Ohio Educational Monthly, March, 1903, from the pen of H. S. Lehr.

The subject of Normal Schools has engaged the attention of the Governors, legislators, state commissioners of schools and of the leading educators of our state from an early date.

Governor Worthington, in his message to the legislature, in 1817, recommended that there be established at Columbus a free school for the education of poor boys to prepare them for the profession of teaching. His argument in favor of such a school was forcible and logical. No action was taken by the legislature, but the recommendation caused a general discussion among educators on the subject of Training Schools.

In 1836, the legislature, by a resolution, requested Professor Stowe, of Cincinnati, during his travels in Europe, to make a special study of the schools and education in the countries visited and report to the next General Assembly with such recommendations as he might think best. He
made a very comprehensive report at the next session, in 1837. Legislators might still study that report to advantage.

In 1838, Dr. Asa D. Lord established the Western Reserve Teachers' Seminary at Kentland. It would now be called a private Normal School. This school did excellent work and its influence extended throughout the entire state.

In 1837, the office of State Superintendent of Common Schools was created and Samuel Lewis was elected to the office. It is probable that no man ever did more for the schools of Ohio and the general cause of education than Mr. Lewis. The legislature passed a resolution in 1838 requesting the superintendent to report at the next session upon the expediency of establishing a school or schools for the training of teachers and other students, the proper location of such school or schools, etc. He made an exhaustive and valuable report. The report will bear studying today by lawmakers and teachers. In 1840, the office of Superintendent of Schools was abolished and the duties of that office devolved on the Secretary of State. William T. Trevitt was Secretary of State. His report to the legislature in 1841 was pointed and valuable. The reports and recommendation of Mr. Lewis and Mr. Trevitt were not acted on by the General Assembly. In 1844-56 Samuel Galloway, then Secretary of State, recommended, as Mr. Trevitt had done, that Normal Schools should be established, also recommended the organizing by the state of special Normal de-

partments in connection with the Colleges and Universities already existing in the state.

Teachers' Institutes were recommended as a substitute for State Normal Schools. The first Teachers' Institute held in Ohio was at Sandusky, in 1845.

The Ohio Teachers' Association was organized in 1847. The Association took an active interest in favor of establishing State Normal Schools and on different occasions petitioned the legislature to take such action, but no such action was taken. Many politicians and some educators took the position that the training of teachers should be left to private enterprises.

The advisability of establishing and conducting a Normal School by the State Teachers' Association was discussed at a meeting held in July, 1854, and also at a meeting held in Cincinnati, December, 1854, and at a meeting held in Cleveland in August, 1855. The Association voted to accept the proposition made by Cyrus McNeely at the previous meeting of the Association to donate grounds and buildings at Hopedale, Harrison County, to the value of not less than $10,000 for Normal School purposes, if the Association would sustain the school. A committee of eleven of the leading educators of the state was appointed to take possession of the property. John Ogden was elected principal. The school was not self-sustaining financially and at a meeting of the Association held in December, 1857, a resolution was passed petitioning the General Assembly to take possession of the school and make it a State Normal School. No definite action was taken by the leg-
islature. In 1859 Edwin Regal and William Brinkerhoff took the management of the school as a private school and in 1875 the Teachers' Association entirely severed its connection with the school. The school did good service for the cause of education. Financially it has been a failure. On several occasions it would die apparently, but would be resuscitated again. Its existence was precarious.

The second Normal School in Ohio had its origin in a three weeks' Teachers' Institute held at Oxford, Ohio, in the summer of 1855. The instructors were John Hancock, A. J. Rickoff and other prominent Ohio educators. During its session an organization was formed called the "Southwestern State Normal School Association." The first trustees were A. J. Rickoff, Charles Rogers, and E. C. Ellis. The trustees of the Academy at Lebanon offered to donate their building and lot to the trustees of the Normal School Association and to furnish eighty pupils if Lebanon would be selected for the location of the school. Professor Alfred Holbrook was elected principal. The school opened November 24, 1855. It did not prove a success under the management of the trustees of the Association and Professor Holbrook assumed the management of the school. Later the name was changed to National Normal University. In addition to giving instruction in school management and other normal work, much time was devoted to academic work, and departments were added in Engineering, Law, Music, etc. Under the management of Professor Holbrook the school was a great success. It is still in successful operation. Students flocked to the school from nearly every state in the Union and frequently there were more than 1,200 students in attendance. Professor Holbrook had been engaged in teaching twenty-one or two years before he went to Lebanon. Several years he had charge of an academy at Republic, and in 1852-3-4 he taught at Marlboro. In November, 1854, he took charge of the public schools of Salem and remained one year. While in charge of the village schools at Marlboro he actually conducted a Normal School, and scores of teachers entered the school from all over the state. Students attended there from Indiana. Professor Holbrook must be acknowledged the father of all the successful, independent Normal Schools in Ohio and Indiana and in several other states. He is a born teacher and is still teaching. He is combative and will therefore never get the credit due him as an educator.

The Western Reserve Normal School was incorporated as the "Huron Institute" in 1830. In 1858 it was changed to a Normal School, and it did excellent work under the management of Miss Delia Palmer. The school devoted much time to the training of teachers. It served its purpose and is now at rest.

The Orwell Normal Institute was organized as an academy in 1853. In 1865 it was reorganized under the name of the Orwell Normal Institute. Its patronage has been mostly from Northeastern Ohio. It has rendered good service to those who desire to prepare for the profession of teaching.

The Ohio Central Normal School at Worthington was organized in 1871. The joint principals were William
Mitchell and John Ogden. From its announcement it gave great promise of success. In 1872 Mr. Mitchell sold his interest to M. H. Lewis and he became one of the principals of the school. In 1875 Mr. Lewis sold his interest to Professor Ogden who then had the full control of the school. The location was fine and the building fairly good. The school did not succeed. Too much theory and not enough practice killed it.

In 1870 or '71, Professor J. Frase Richard organized the Northwestern Normal School at Republic, Seneca County. He leased the old academy building that had been used for school purposes by such eminent educators as Professor Schuyler, T. W. Harvey, and Alfred Holbrook. He had associated with him Professor Brown, now president of the famous Normal School at Valparaiso, Indiana; Professor L. M. Sniff, later president of the flourishing Normal School at Angola, Indiana. He also had as teachers several graduates from a State Normal School in New York. The school prospered. More room was needed. He was promised a good building at Fostoria. He moved the school to that city, but the building was not furnished and the teaching had to be done in halls and churches. The proprietors of the Normal School at Ada took advantage of the situation and bought the school and moved it to Ada, as much so as a school can be bought and moved. At different times since that transaction Normal Schools have been organized at Fostoria. All died, but their epitaphs have not yet been written.

About the year 1876 there was organized a Normal School at Wadsworth, Medina County. W. F. Harper was the first principal. It has lived, died, been reorganized and at present is dormant.

In 1881 the Northeastern Ohio Normal School was organized at Canfield. The school is doing good work, although the attendance is not large. In 1888 Professor John Ogden, President of the Normal School at Worthington, organized a Normal School at Fayette, Fulton County. When the school at Worthington failed, Professor Ogden sold his interest at Fayette to Professor Solomon Metzler and some other parties, who conducted the school several years. On account of some difficulty arising in the faculty, Professor Metzler organized a Normal School at Wauseon. The citizens of Wauseon made a liberal donation. A fine school building was erected for the use of the school. The school was a financial failure. The building is now used by the city for public school purposes.

In 1885 the citizens of Middlepoint, Van Wert County, organized a Normal College. The first president was W. F. Hufford. The school has had a varied experience. Its doors are closed at present.

About the year 1879, Professor J. Frase Richard and Professor Warren Darst, both graduates of the Normal School at Lebanon, Ohio, and prominent educators, organized a Normal School at Mansfield, Ohio. It continued about three years.

The Normal School at Smithville, Ohio, was organized by Professor John Eberly in 1864. It is still under his supervision. When first organized it was known as an Academy.
About twenty years ago many Normal Schools, Normal Colleges and Normal Universities were organized in Ohio. There were three organized in Marion County; one at Agosta, one at Green Camp, one at Marion. There were three or four organized in Logan County and several in Seneca County, one or two in Union County, one or two in Mercer County, etc., etc. Nearly all died young. A few lived ten or twelve years, but on short allowance.

The Ohio Normal University at Ada, Hardin County, was organized in 1871 under the corporate name of Northwestern Ohio Normal School. Its origin dates to the spring of 1866. Its founder proposed to the village School Board that he would teach the first year for $60 per month, provided that he would be granted the use of the school building for a select school when the public school was not in session, and that if he should prove successful in securing non-resident students, the citizens of the town and vicinity should assist him in erecting a suitable building for a Normal School. The village soon erected a brick building to accommodate the public school pupils and also the non-resident students. In the autumn of 1870 the citizens agreed to assist in erecting the building for the Normal School. August 14, 1871, the school opened with an enrollment of 147 students. The school was organized with two departments: Literary and Music; Engineering and Commercial Departments were added soon thereafter. Much time was devoted to the classes in Pedagogy and the Teachers' Training Class; and as the President of the Normal School was also Superintendent of the Public Schools, model classes were formed for practice teaching. As the school grew, other departments were added. At the present time there are thirteen departments constituting the University. The object of establishing the school was not only to fit those intending to teach, for their profession, although of prime importance, but also to afford opportunities for the poor and middle classes of society to procure such an education as one might desire, and at the least expense possible; and to conduct a school where students could enter at any time and study almost any branch.

Forty years ago, in nearly all Academies and Colleges, the student had to adjust his work to suit the curriculum for that term. The wants or wishes of the student were but little consulted. To accommodate the poor boys and girls who work their way through school, who can go a term now and then, means hard work for the teachers. The founder of the school at Ada taught ten hours a day for a number of years and all the teachers taught six and some occasionally seven and even eight hours a day. In addition to this hard work in the school room, the sick were cared for and the moral training of the students carefully watched. Religious culture was not neglected. All this meant work, work, often eighteen hours out of twenty-four. What has been the result? For many years the annual enrollment has been over three thousand different students. Students are in attendance from nearly every state in the Union and also from many foreign countries.
## ENROLLMENT OF STUDENTS

1870 - 1902

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Total number of students enrolled during the year:

- 1888-89: 2473
- 1889-90: 2476
- 1890-91: 2810
- 1891-92: 2932
- 1892-93: 2834
- 1893-94: 2744
- 1894-95: 2865
- 1895-96: 3073
- 1896-97: 3152
- 1897-98: 3209
- 1898-99: 3227
- 1899-00: 3349
- 1900-01: 3298
- 1901-02: 3086
- 1902-03: 3089
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